



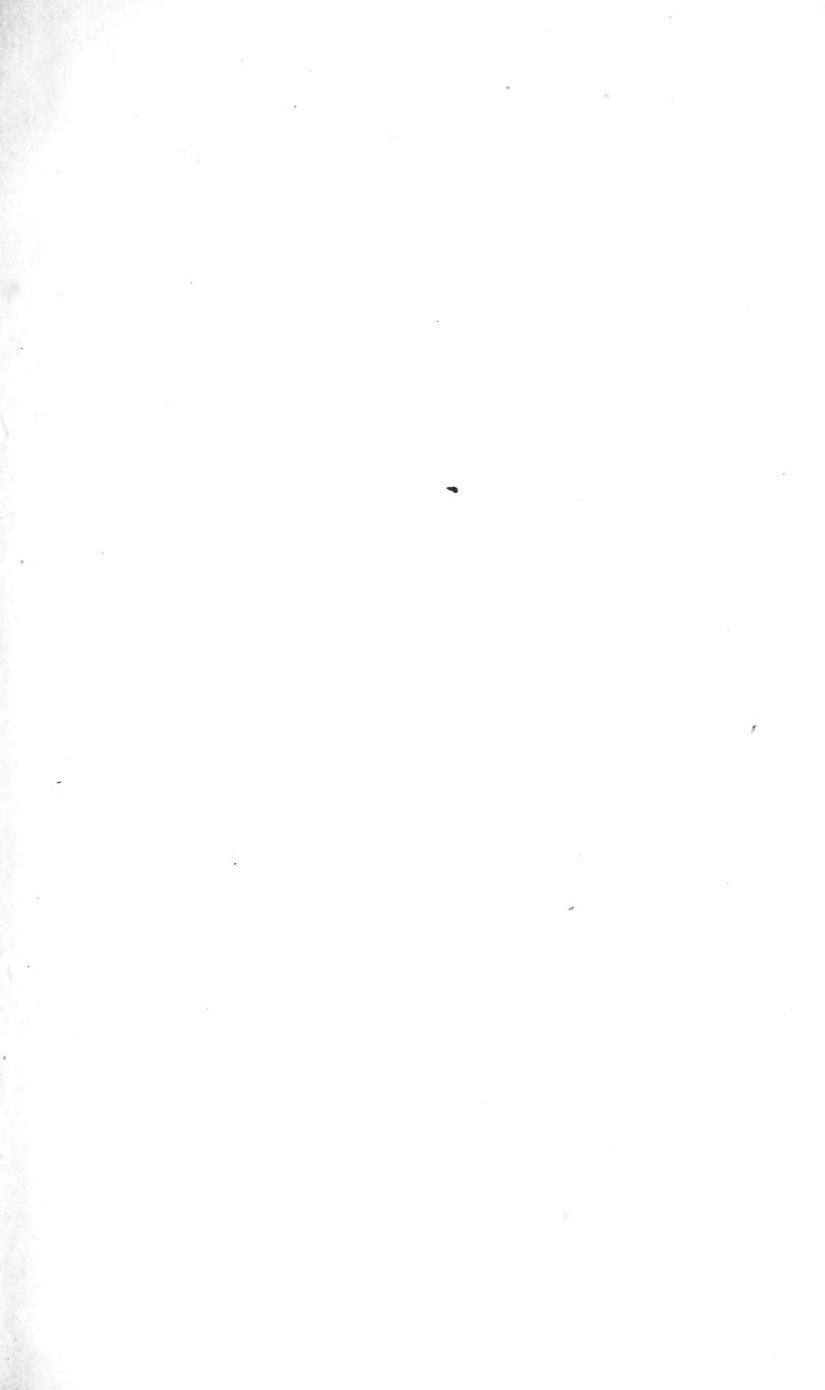
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YARNDALE.

VOL. I.

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By R. B. Lamb

YARNDALE:

AN UNSENSATIONAL STORY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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YARNDALE.

CHAPTER I.

A CONFERENCE.

‘WELL, Graham, how are the hands this morning? Uneasy and irritable, I suppose?’

This question, addressed to a young man with a name apparently from beyond the Tweed, might seem at first sight to convey an offensive allusion. None such, however, was intended. In manufacturing phraseology an operative is styled ‘a hand’—for no other reason, it may be assumed, than that the hand is the principal agent in the accomplishment of his daily work. Each class of society describes a human being by the organ that is most interesting or useful to it. The father of a large family reckons by mouths, the opera dancer by eyes, the singer by ears, the lover by hearts, the lawyer by briefs, the clergyman by souls, the manufacturer by hands.

‘ Never satisfied — never satisfied ! ’ — the speaker went on, muttering to himself. ‘ Well, sir,’ resuming his inquiry, ‘ what account of them do you bring ? ’

‘ I am sorry to say, sir,’ was the reply, ‘ that there is considerable uneasiness among the workpeople, and I fear that the dissatisfaction increases rather than subsides.’

‘ You say so ? Now, I declare to you, sir, that all this disgusts me beyond measure. Here am I, employing more than a thousand hands in my mills, paying them regularly and treating them well ; and yet they are dissatisfied—dissatisfied, sir ! I have half a mind to close the works at once, and turn them all adrift. I am inclined to dispose of that mill property at any sacrifice ; I have nothing but trouble from it, and but little return—comparatively little profit. Depend upon it, young man, ingratitude is the curse of our age.’

The elder of the two speakers, who was taking this high moral ground in the colloquy, was a man verging towards seventy years of age. He was a little, spare, restless creature, with an aquiline nose, a keen eye, and a face like Peter Bell’s, ‘ sharp as the wind that cuts the hawthorn fence.’ His hair was bristling back from his forehead, and of that wiry texture and iron-grey colour which is the charac-

teristic of a well-bred terrier dog. His bony hand, contracted fingers, and long nails seemed to be ever grasping imaginary bank-notes or bills of exchange, while his mind at intervals might have been wandering to the antipodes in search of commerce, or buried in interminable calculations, or shut up in some ponderous brass-bound ledger. As, however, he declaimed against ingratitude and took a few hasty strides across his room, it was manifest that he retained much of his mental and bodily activity, and that the weight of seventy years sat lightly upon him.

The man addressed as Graham was about five-and-twenty. His appearance and manner were at once modest and collected, while his clear mode of expression and accurate judgment were sufficient evidence that his mind had been well formed, by whatever process or in whatever school the discipline had been carried on. He was manifestly in the employment of the senior, and had attended early at his master's office to receive instructions on certain matters of business which required immediate attention.

'Then, there is this other mischief to worry me!' continued the elder of the two, soliloquising and muttering his meditations like an old crone. 'Misfortunes never come single.

They swarm ; I have found it so all my life. I never made one bad speculation but another followed directly, and topped it. Is it that the foul fiend tries to bring all his batteries to bear against a man at once, and to take his prosperity and comfort by storm ? There is another thing, Graham, I have to speak to you about,' looking up and addressing the young man directly : ' I have another ugly weight on my mind, besides that which springs out of the ingratitude of those troublesome " hands." '

' I hope nothing serious has happened, sir ?'

' Here,' he went on, selecting a letter from the bundle he had received by the morning's delivery—' here is a letter from my son at Oxford. And what do you think he writes about ? It is about money, sir, money, that root of all evil. He is in debt, sir, in debt, the scapegrace ! Has he learnt this failing from me, think you ? Have I not invariably, by precept and by example, taught him his duty as an honest man ? Have I not warned him against self-indulgence since he was a child ? Have I not inculcated on him the wise precept—I forget whose it is—" Owe no man anything " ?'

Graham did not seem to doubt but that he had assiduously impressed so much of the apostle's text upon his son ; but it might have

been more questionable how far he had urged the precept contained in the latter portion of it, which refers to a moral debt of some importance. A bankrupt in the interchange of love may discharge his pecuniary obligations to a penny; and the old gentleman, perhaps, was not so strict in balancing his moral as his mercantile ledger.

‘I trust, sir,’ rejoined Graham, ‘it will not be a matter of any serious moment. It is not unusual, if I have heard aright, for young men to overrun their account a trifle at the University.’

‘Overrun their account a trifle, say you?’ Do you suppose I should have been standing here, if I had been accustomed to overrun my account a trifle, eh, sir? And yet these young scamps will spend, like lazy fools, what their fathers have earned like industrious men. Hear how coolly the young gentleman writes. “Dear Father”—I wonder he did not write Dear Governor, or Dear old Gaffer—dear father, aye, and *dear* son, say I—“I am happy to inform you that I have just passed my final examination with some credit, and have taken my B.A. degree.” Some credit! humph! Latin and Greek credit, I expect! but is there any credit in being in debt, I wonder? It is living on credit, no doubt. “My stay in Oxford will

not now be long, and, before leaving, it would be a great satisfaction to me if I could settle all my accounts." No doubt it would, at your father's expense. "I am very reluctant to have to ask so great a favour, but I am compelled to say that it will take a few hundred pounds to discharge all the bills I owe, and —" A few hundred pounds! a few hundred devils as like! The vagabond talks of a few hundred pounds as he would about a supplement of the "Times" a month old. He might suppose that I was made of bank-notes, or that I had the Mint at my disposal, from the cool way in which he writes about a few hundred pounds! And this, too, when the money market is as tight as a drum-head; when the Bank discount, sir, is at 5 per cent.! I am half disposed to disinherit the fellow—to cut him off with a shilling.'

'You have certainly just reason to feel aggrieved,' replied Graham, assuming as serious a countenance as he could; 'but would it not be well, sir, after all, to arrange the matter as quietly as possible—that is, of course, after you have stated to Mr. Frederick your views upon his conduct. I should be sorry to seem to advise on such a delicate question; but if the list of bills undischarged amounts to some two or three hundred pounds, would it not be best to

send up the money, and require Mr. Frederick to return as soon as convenient?’

‘Why, man,’ retorted the other, sharply, ‘you are not such a goose as to advise me to send up the money by a bank cheque, are you? Send up the money to a young hair-brained scamp who has run several hundred pounds into debt! Did mortal man ever hear of such a thing? Why, you stupid fellow, he would just deal out the bank-notes as if they were a pack of cards, and think no more about them than if they were scraps of “fent.”¹ He would not have the manly honesty to beat down these rascally Oxford tradesmen to accept the real value for their goods. He would pay eighty shillings a dozen for some murderous decoction of logwood called port wine, and five pounds for a pair of patent breeches, the puppy! and ask no questions at all. My firm belief, sir, is that the simpleton would not so much as ask for discount—not for a fraction of discount, sir!—perhaps not take a receipt for the money paid! Would you allow such a wiseacre to

¹ A ‘fent’ is the end cut from a web, to make the whole length even and suitable for sale, and is consequently a cheaper portion of the cloth. The classical expression for receiving a man’s statement with caution is—‘You must take it *cum grano scelis*.’ A common Lancashire expression is—‘You must fent it (dock it) a bit.’

manage for you the balancing of a troublesome account?’

‘Then, probably, you would think it best to entrust the settlement of these accounts to someone else—that is, in case you determine to arrange the business at all?’

‘Of course I should—of course; what else could you expect? I will think over the matter after awhile—I have no time just now—I have to attend in ten minutes a meeting in Johnson’s Bankruptcy case—a loss there, too; and, if I determine to pay the money, probably I shall require you to go up and settle everything in a business-like way. Good morning! Do the best you can to keep those tiresome workpeople quiet; mind, I have not yet decided to advance those few hundred pounds for the blockhead. Good morning.’

CHAPTER II.

A BIOGRAPHY.

THE name of the elder speaker, in the dialogue recorded in the last chapter, is Shorland. And who is Mr. Shorland? He is evidently a man of some position now. Was he born to the heirship of mills and machinery? Had he succeeded to an extensive trade and large possessions by the easy right of primogeniture? On the contrary, he had inherited none of these blessings; neither, as he first saw the light, would his mother or his friends have predicted that such good things were in store for him. Under one of the humblest roofs in one of the meanest streets in the large commercial and manufacturing town of Yarndale did the infant Shorland raise his first puling cry of distress, initiatory to human existence and lifelong struggle. His father was a hand-loom weaver, an occupation more profitable in those days than now, when steam and machinery have almost superseded manual labour. Still, through improvident habits—a want of management in

the mother, and the drinking propensities of the father—the whole Shorland family found themselves every week-end destitute of the common necessaries of life. Domestic brawls were consequently household scenes; coarse language was at the best the current medium of mutual communication among them; and tongue-conflicts between husband and wife were often the preludes to a trial of pugilistic skill, in which the victory generally turned upon the degree of drunkenness in which the father of the family had returned home. And yet our hero grew up among brothers and sisters, thriving moderately amid dirt and discomforts; he retained vitality in the teeth of those most deadly enemies of human life—a meagre diet, an impure atmosphere, filthy habits, and careless parents.¹

Do you wish to investigate with your own eyes how young Shorland thrived in his infancy and childhood? Then, walk with ordinary observation through the back streets of Yarn-

¹ It is true that Teetotalers as a class are often troublesome; they frequently carry their views beyond all reason, and they are inclined to quarrel with you if you do not agree with them; but, at the same time, these Teetotal Societies and Bands of Hope have effected good results. It is very common to find the children of degraded and dissipated parents taking the pledge in the sight and endurance of their misery, and growing up sober and respectable persons.

dale at this day, and you will find many counterparts of our friend shooting up through the dirt like asparagus plants, but from their appearance, we fear, not born under his lucky planet. Observe that girl of six, carrying in her arms a baby almost as large as herself. The mother is either gossiping with a neighbour or at work through the day, and the elder child, as nurse, has to carry the little sister or brother out for fresh air, and to be 'out of the way.' Every moment the pair are in imminent peril of rolling down together on the rough pavement; such a mischance has been, and will be again; it is of no great importance—the youthful nurse has only the trouble of shaking herself and picking up the bits before she starts afresh. You see now that she packs up this little bundle of vitality in an old shawl, and places it in an empty wheelbarrow head upwards, while she is going to have a game at hop-scotch with another girl of her own age. Several boys without shoes and stockings are deep in some curious kind of play at no great distance; and here and there may be seen groups of mothers, in bed-gowns and linsey-woolsey petticoats, Dutch-built, broad-beamed, indulging in some gossip pertinent to the passing day. One woman is vehemently narrating how her husband came home

‘in drink’ on the preceding evening, and how she had inflicted on him summary punishment in his helplessness;¹ another is complaining that her son Siah—an abbreviation of Josiah—one of the finest lads in existence by her account, has ‘got the bag’² most unfairly from his workshop; another is discoursing eloquently on some projected marriage between Bill Jackson and Betty Parker—that interminable topic

¹ As characteristic of the mode of life alluded to above, we—the author—may be allowed to describe the following scene which we witnessed not long ago. A little old man, all round-about, in a carter’s frock, very considerably disguised in beer, was clinging to some palings in one of the back streets. A little old woman, a degree less in size, but equally round-about, in a check bed-gown, was pushing him along, and getting him forward step by step. ‘Well, Granny,’ we said, ‘you are rolling him home.’ She looked round rather sternly. ‘You are rolling him home, Granny,’ we repeated. ‘Well,’ she said, in some bitterness of tone, ‘what’s that to yo’—he’s my oan (own),’ thus asserting her right to do what she liked with her own, as positively as did a duke. ‘Well,’ we proceeded, ‘don’t be angry: when you get him home, be kind to him.’ The old man caught the words at once, and, turning round, nodded his head in gratitude, and repeated the words in a half-articulate tone—‘Aye, aye, be kind to him—be kind to him.’ He knew his doom. ‘Nay, nay,’ she said, in a short, determined manner, ‘I’se clout him’ (chastise, perhaps, with the dishclout); and she at once began to shove on her bundle of property, emitting a grunt at each effort.

² Sent away bag and baggage. We once stood near a Lancashire mechanic and his wife as they were inspecting a collection of wax-works. ‘Who’s that?’ inquired the woman, pointing to Louis Philippe. ‘Why,’ replied the husband, ‘it’s that chap as was king o’ France, and geet th’ bag.’

of conversation in all circles, aristocratic and plebeian—that theme of universal interest, whether it relate to the Hon. Georgiana Blanche Somerset or to plain Peggy Potts; another is haranguing fluently on a subject almost as interesting as that of matrimony—Mrs. Higginson has had twins, beautiful specimens of the species, and ‘as like each other as eggs;’ and all the while the little one is sitting in the wheelbarrow without whimpering or apparently wondering. Indeed, it is enough to make one weep to see that helpless microcosm of humanity sitting unnoticed and unnoticing, with its awakening sensibilities indurating, while waggons are rolling by, and mills are rumbling, and anvils are ringing, and life in every form is bustling on within sight and hearing. And yet that diminutive thing carries within it the germs of all the full-blown human feelings—the gentler affections, and the fiercer passions of the man—as well as that principle of immortality which is equally the property of the poor as of the rich, of the unlearned as of the philosopher; and if it survive the neglect and hardship of its childhood, it will have to go through many a hand-to-hand encounter in the battle of life, struggling with the marrowless skeletons of human wants—want of food, want of clothing, want of employment, want of

knowledge—in short, want of bodily comforts and mental attainments.

Such was young Shorland's infantine existence; and the wonder was how he ever survived, in the face of such impediments, to the days of articulate speech. Live, however, he did; and if work, according to the theory of Mr. Carlyle, be the end of life, he was not long before he experienced this discipline. In those days there was no limit to the age when children might be employed in the factory, nor was there to the hours of work. The whole system was then a severe and cruel one; and it was in the drama of labour thus conducted that the child Shorland made his *début*.

The boy Shorland was not in any way especially remarkable among his companions; he had no distinctive traits of character, so far as an ordinary observer could judge. Still, he had, even in his earliest years, those qualities which help a young person to 'get on in the world.' The Sunday and night schools were just coming into operation, and he managed to acquire there the elements of education, as they are also the elements of worldly success, in an acquaintance with reading, writing, and arithmetic. He was also a true conservative of his pennies, even among his fellows. He was never known to make a purchase in nuts, or

oranges, or toffy, or peppermint-drops, or gingerbread ; though he never showed a reluctance to share with any of his more reckless companions who had made such a temporary investment. Young Shorland had an intuitive perception of the value of money, even in the sight of parental extravagance and waste. He loved it in secret, *why*, he did not clearly comprehend ; his longing to accumulate was an instinct ; neither did he permit the companion that worked with him, or the brother that slept with him, to know that he was possessed of the capital of a farthing. So that, at twelve years of age, by picking up and putting away odds and ends, unconsidered trifles, our friend had five spade-ace guineas in safe concealment under lock and key ; a treasure which, he knew, would not have long remained undisturbed, if it had been detected by his reckless parent.

When he was twelve years of age, Master Shorland, who combined with a love of money a considerable amount of natural shrewdness, began to think that he could make more of himself than by continuing a factory operative all his life. Neither had he any relish in the abstract for wending his way to the mill at five o'clock in the morning, through frost and snow, without breakfast and barely clad, perhaps without shoes and stockings. He sought,

therefore, and obtained a place in one of the large warehouses of the town, as errand boy. His wages were smaller than his former earnings; but the place was more respectable and easy, and it offered prospective advantages which the factory did not. His motto thus early was, *Respice ad finem* (have an eye to the end). Neither was he wrong in his calculations. He rose by degrees from one step in his business to another, neither forgetful of his master's interests nor his own. He took lodgings at a cheap rate, and spent nothing over the vanities of life, as did his fellows. At one-and-twenty he was a salesman in the warehouse; as pinching and screwing for his employers as if it had been for himself. He was always on the alert; he never threw away a chance when a bargain was to be made. His every thought, feeling, and desire converged into one focus—an effort to make money. It was to him the be-all and end-all of life. Onward he advanced in his business, rising higher and higher in the establishment; his knowledge of the various departments of the trade was very accurate; he understood the nature of heavy goods and of fancy articles; he knew when to lay in a stock of shirtings, blankets, and fustians, and when to invest in 'greys;' he had a clear notion of what would be a pay-

ing speculation at a given time; and, as he rose in his position, more and more did the feeling intensify, that man was not born to eat or to drink or to reason, but to accumulate money. He valued the human being, on the Horatian principle, at what he was worth on 'Change, *tanti, quantum habes*; his notions of 'a good man' were those of Shylock, that he was 'sufficient.' Acting on these principles, he went on steadily, till he was about thirty, when a managing partner was required for the firm; and as he seemed to be the very man for the situation, and could bring capital into the business to the amount of two or three thousand pounds, he was duly installed into the very responsible office, with large powers of action and control, and with 'the signature of the firm.'

Is the case of Mr. Shorland an exceptional one in our large commercial towns? By no means. Very many of our manufacturers and merchants have raised themselves to wealth and its splendours out of the deep mire of poverty. Nor have any other qualifications been required for this than those exhibited by Mr. Shorland. Do not, in your imaginativeness, extract a romance out of the fact, that a man who was born under the roof of a cottage, and achieved his early earnings at half-a-crown

a week, has died a millionaire in a palace. There would be a sensational power in Aladdin's lamp if you had it, it is true. There are some passages in the history of Whittington and his remunerative cat which excite our envy; but such fanciful incidents only come true once in a century. We want something more matter-of-fact for every-day life; we must expect success from more prosaic causes. Early saving, never-ceasing application, a continued vigilance in watching for opportunities and a decision in seizing on them, an utter suppression of all imagination, and a facility for reducing the events of life to a rule of three sum, in practical utilitarianism; these, in combination with lucky chances, are the materials employed by the men who are called the 'architects of their own fortunes.'

Thenceforward Mr. Shorland's course was like that of other successful merchants. He had gained a footing in an extensive commercial establishment, and it devolved on him to work it; and this he did with a prudence, and yet a daring, which raised it higher and higher in the aristocracy of trade. And thus, for five-and-thirty years he had lived in full pursuit of his one object—wealth, absorbed in the hazard of buying and selling, rolling up capital into the business like a cotton ball, stretching out

his arms in every direction of trade, thinking nothing too small, nothing too large, for his grasp; and now, as he was on his way to the bankruptcy meeting in a dress that might have been purchased from a second-hand clothes-shop, he was recognised on all sides as a magnate in the mercantile world—a proprietor of mills, a shipowner, an exporter of goods to every quarter of the globe, and a man of unknown and unfathomable wealth—a man worth nearer a full million than half of one in pounds sterling.

CHAPTER III.

OXFORD.

A FEW days after the dialogue contained in our first chapter, Graham found himself in Oxford, with the purpose of arranging Fred. Shorland's affairs, which had become somewhat entangled from a long neglect of parental advice—always to balance his accounts to a penny, and keep a clean ledger. Alas! young Shorland's ledger would have been a curiosity, if you could have found it; but as no such manuscript has ever been discovered, it is more than probable that none ever existed. Not that he had been a very expensive man. He had concluded his University career with much less expense than many undergraduates. He had lived through his three or four years a gentlemanly easy life, procuring everything he required without trouble, and trusting that, after a slight brush with his parent, which he knew to be inevitable, his affairs would be wound up satisfactorily, and his creditors receive twenty shillings in the pound at the least.

‘Well, Graham, I am glad to see you in Oxford,’ said Shorland, a sprightly, dashing young fellow. ‘I was told you were coming, or you would have startled me. Welcome to this ancient seat of learning! How did you leave all friends at Yarndale? Was the weather serene and temperate, or was there, in Lancashire phrase, “thunner agate (a-going)” in the neighbourhood of Exchange Street? Well, take some breakfast; we shall find plenty of time for business when we have nothing better to do.’

Graham had been patronised by Shorland senior from a boy, and was consequently well known to the son. He answered, however, without any undue familiarity, that a storm had been brewing, but that he hoped it would soon blow over. Not but that his heart in some degree misgave him as he glanced round the room. As he ‘took stock’ of the expensive furniture scattered up and down, or considerably battered, as if it were regarded of no value; as he saw the costly pictures that were hanging on the walls without much order or arrangement; as he observed books elegantly bound lying among hunting-whips, boxing-gloves, single-sticks, foils, cricket-bats, and such like inutilities; and as he eyed the unnecessary profusion of viands on the breakfast-

table, he was afraid lest the paternal cheque would not cover the prodigal's deficiency, and the storm might burst more heavily than he had expected.

There were two others of the party busily engaged on their breakfast—dissimilar in appearance, character, and manner, and yet with sufficient congruity to make them sincere friends. Indeed, you rarely find two young men with mutual attachment who have identical tastes and tempers. Monkhouse was a reading man, and had lately distinguished himself highly in his degree-examination. He was tall, and of a somewhat dark complexion; his countenance was of that pensive cast which is often the result of severe study, yet on occasions it was radiant and mirthful. Though a hard reader, he was by no means a bookworm, and could join with zest in any passing diversion, provided it was neither rude nor indecorous. He was the third son of a baronet of large rental and long pedigree in one of the midland counties, and was a gentleman *ad unguem*. Dolman was a noisy, chattering, good-natured, handsome fellow, with a certain alacrity at getting into scrapes, and a marvellous luck at getting out of them. He was apparently one who acted on the principle that the morrow should take care of itself; though men of this

class often carry with them a deep undercurrent of serious thought, sometimes of melancholy feeling, which they studiously conceal. He was a man of prowess in all athletic exercises; he was a prime oar in the College boat; he excelled at cricket; he was a clever horseman; and he had on one or two occasions, in a row between Town and Gown, come off victorious in a hard encounter with a lusty bargeman. He had not passed through the University as a reading man, it may be guessed from these his qualifications; but he was endowed with good natural powers of mind; neither was he by any means deficient either in scholarship, or literary attainments, or general knowledge—certainly he was much superior to the estimate he gave of himself to others.

‘Well, here we are,’ said Shorland to Graham, ‘three young gentlemen of promise, starting in the race of life, none of us knowing in what line he is to distinguish himself. We are all new-blown bachelors of arts, and open to any likely proposal. What are you cut out for, Dolman? What is your appropriate mission? What say you to taking up with the greengrocery business, or the rag-and-bone trade? By-the-bye, you would have a capital voice for crying muffins and crumpets.’

‘Well,’ replied the other, ‘I am as fit for

that as anything else, for aught I know. My good parent, the old rector, has always told me that I should make nothing out, whatever I tried. He used to say that I never got fairly through anything, except a ladder on one occasion; when I happened to fall through it, and almost broke my neck.'

'You can get through a hundred pound cheque pretty well, I should think?'

'Yes, very fairly, as far as that goes. I've a gift for that accomplishment.'

'What say you to the Insolvent Court?' inquired Monkhouse.

'Aye, by Jove; I may manage that as well as another. It does not require all your classics and metaphysics to work through there. A man, in such a case, has only to trust to his natural genius.'

'Besides, you have got through the schools; you have never been plucked.'

'No,' replied Dolman, wonderingly, 'that is strange enough; how I should ever have passed all my examinations without a single pluck, is more than I could ever make out. It is one of those mysteries in life which are inexplicable. I do not owe it to my perseverance, I suppose; neither to my natural capacity. I fancy I have been pushed through by the weltings I got at Rugby.'

‘That’s what you call being pushed through *a tergo*—propulsion *a posteriori*,’ said Monkhouse.

‘Yes, by Jingo, is it,’ said Dolman, rubbing himself gently, as though a smart were tingling still; ‘the fundamental part of my education was laid deep and sound. Such a studious youth as Monkhouse, I should think, has been unlucky enough never to get a whacking in his life, poor fellow! All his learning has been driven in by the head.’

‘Aye,’ said Shorland, ‘he “jests at wounds who never felt a scar.”’

‘My serious impression though, after all, is,’ continued Dolman, ‘that my smiling face and pleasing aspect have done much to carry me through.’

‘Yes,’ answered Monkhouse; ‘but a smiling face and pleasing aspect will not make good logic out of a bad syllogism, you know; at your examination last week, in the schools, that syllogism had almost done for you.’

‘There was danger in it, no doubt. I wrote it partly perhaps for fun; for somehow a frolic has always had an irresistible attraction with me; but I would not recommend anyone to try such a freak again, in those ancient halls.’

‘The name of one of the examiners,’ said

Shorland, turning to Graham, 'is Daniel; and this madcap turned his syllogism into this form :—

Daniel was a prophet :
Daniel is an examiner :
Therefore, an examiner is a prophet.

I wonder Daniel did not predict the downfall of Dolman the mighty.'

'Never mind,' said Dolman, 'all right; thanks in a great measure to my attractive features! Come, reach me here that spiced cup! To the health of Daniel! May he go on prophesying, and never pluck! And now that we are full-blown bachelors, graduates of this noble University, is it not time that we should be thoughtful and discreet, looking cautiously to our steps? What are you going to turn your philosophic head to, Master Monkhouse? You look wise enough for an embryo Lord Chancellor, or an incipient Archbishop of Canterbury.'

'I have not decided yet; but work at something or other, I shall. I suppose, Dolman, you intend to vegetate like a cabbage.'

'Why not, Mr. Philosopher?' replied Dolman. 'My impression is, that if many besides myself vegetated like cabbages, and never interfered with what they did not understand, it would be all the better for creation in general.'

What do we see in the world? Philosophers, metaphysicians, scholars, and such like dry-as-dusts, who are everlastingly grubbing up something, looking wise, and writing foolery; would not they be more useful as cabbages? Politicians, and orators, who talk by the hour, and do not understand themselves—it would be better if you could convert them into their own turnips. Poets, who are ever mooning and moping and groaning about ladies' eyes—the sickly fellows! I would turn them into dandelions, or peonies, or poppies.'

'On my word, Dolman,' said Monkhouse, 'you are getting eloquent; this airing in the Schools has opened out your intellect, and done you a power of good.'

'Never mind. I think, though, as I have the germs of eloquence in me, I shall turn my thoughts towards the Bar.'

'At the public-house?'

'Go along; the Bar where oratory abounds and assurance is of value. Will you not tell me, Monkhouse, into what useful path you intend to direct your discreet steps? Could you not find this energetic youth plenty of work, Shorland, in your beautiful city of Yarndale? What say you to setting him down before a colossal ledger, or making him manager, in a paper cap and check apron, over

some hundred wild skittish wenches in a factory? He is a brave fellow, and would earn his living like a man. Monkhouse, I'll give you a character. Reach me the tankard; come, here's luck to you!—your health and success in all your undertakings!

In conversation of this kind the breakfast passed over; after which Monkhouse promised to act as Graham's guide in a tour of sight-seeing, the latter having consented to postpone for a few days the investigation into Shorland's financial position. For, in truth, some dinner and supper parties had yet to be given, as commemorative of admission to the degree of B.A.

'Take care of yourself,' said Dolman to Monkhouse on parting; 'you know that there is some hard work cut out for us this evening.'

Monkhouse had agreed to accompany Graham out of mere courtesy, not expecting that there would be much communion in their tastes and modes of thought. What, however, he began out of mere courtesy, he continued with a lively interest; for he found his companion not simply intelligent, but on many subjects his equal. Graham had no classical knowledge, neither had he the graces of address that grow up imperceptibly with those in Monkhouse's station. But his manners were

respectful—indeed, refined—and his style of expression was clear and distinct, as that of one who is decided in his mode of thought. With modern literature his acquaintance was very extensive, and with those political questions of the day which referred to commercial extension and popular rights, he was more conversant than most of the young men at Oxford, who as a rule are somewhat too indifferent to such subjects.

‘And what are we to think of Yarndale?’ inquired Monkhouse. ‘We hear so much that is contradictory about the manufacturing districts, that we have no means of forming an accurate opinion upon their social character. I have sometimes spoken with Shorland about them, but he seems to be as ignorant as myself about the condition of the working classes. I suppose he has never had any intercourse with them.’

‘No, most probably not. The owners of mill property in Yarndale, and in most manufacturing towns, reside, as a rule, at some distance from their works—in the suburbs, or still further out in the country—and their families have necessarily no acquaintance with their work-people.’

‘That must be an evil,’ said Monkhouse. ‘It must be unfortunate for a working popula-

tion where the employer exercises no social influence over his workmen. But I will come and see for myself. Perhaps I may find that my inexperience has misled me. Shorland has invited me often to Yarndale, and I have arranged to spend a few weeks with him shortly.'

'If, sir,' said Graham, 'you really wish to form an accurate estimate of the habits and condition of our working people, you must certainly come and judge for yourself. The accounts you read will often mislead you. If you are inclined to make the social and moral condition of our operative populations your study, you will find much to interest you among us.'

It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast than that between Oxford and Yarndale. Graham had passed all his life, with the exception of his short summer excursions, amidst the noise and bustle of this latter city. The rumble of machinery and the smell of oil, crowded streets and heavily laden wag-gons, black-faced mechanics and weary-handed weavers, trade reports and cotton circulars, successful ventures and collapsing firms, the rise of some speculators to wealth and eminence and the fall of others into poverty and oblivion—such things had become elements of

his being. But, in the atmosphere of Oxford, the very idea of these rough scenes in the battle of life seemed an incongruity. In that theological, philosophic, and classical city there were neither houses of merchandise nor anxious strivings of commerce; a spirit of repose seemed to pervade the place. Graham inspected with surprise and delight the massive colleges, gloomy and monastic, yet imposing in their architectural design, around which gathered so many historical and biographical associations; he trode with a species of awe the corridors of the Bodleian, where the wisdom of a thousand years had been stereotyped and concentrated; he paced with reverential step the decorated chapels, the ancient halls, and the quiet cloisters, that belong to many of the colleges; and he could not but admire the gay young fellows in the dawn of energetic life, thoughtless though many were and utterly unlike those of his own class, who were lounging along the streets, or mounted on horseback, or promenading in Christ Church meadows, or practising their archery in St. John's or New College Gardens, or dashing down the Isis, a rollicking party in an eight-oar on their way to a pic-nic at Nuneham.

Be not startled, friendly reader, if you do not find at Oxford every face a grave one,

looking metaphysics and Aristotle at you. It is but a small portion of the undergraduates comparatively who have the ability, even if they had the inclination, to master the higher departments of Oxford study. Neither think that the time of your son has been altogether misspent there, if he has acquired manly habits, an honourable tone of feeling, and gentleman-like manners. More, unquestionably, might be made of the large endowments attached to each College, than providing simply for the support of a certain number of Fellows, of whom many live in idleness, and very few produce any work that has a practical influence on our age and people. Improvements, doubtless, might yet be wrought in the Oxford system of discipline and instruction. Let us, however, be thankful for what we have; let us adopt the charitable precept of Horace, and not be offended with a few specks, where the picture as a whole is such as to attract our admiration.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STORM RISING.

THE months of May and June are to Oxford men the most dangerous of months. The earth is now rising from her winter torpor, and assuming her summer clothing, fresh and green; the flocks are beginning to browse on a thousand hills, and the lambs to frisk in the pastures; the lark rises on its whirring wings, and the nightingale's notes are again heard. All nature is glad; and why should not both graduate and undergraduate be merry? Not that the genial season is very visible on inanimate nature in the neighbourhood of Oxford. The face of the country is, generally speaking, barren and uninteresting; the bleak hills and stiff soils that surround the city remain dull and dreary, even under the magic influence of spring, as though there existed some mutual repulsion between the real flowers of nature and the ideal ones of rhetoric, the living energies of spring-time and the dead languages of Greece and Rome, the

life-bestowing properties of May and the marrowless dry bones of metaphysics. Still the summer's sun and warm breezes have a cheering influence on Oxford life. The senior Fellow, whose delight is in 'unbuttoning him after supper, and sleeping upon benches after noon;' who reasons that 'in much learning there is much grief;' that 'he who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow;' and that 'in making of books there is no end;' and who accordingly reverses the philosophic maxim, and seeks, not tranquillity of body from comfort of mind, but tranquillity of mind from ease of body;—he awakes from his dreamy torpor to a sense of enjoyment. The tutor who has become a walking 'Nichomachæan Ethics' bound in calf—the personation of an abstract idea—an embodied *Organon*—who discourses in a syllogism and reduces every reason he gives to one or other of the 'Topics;' who sits down in a logical 'figure' and rises from his seat in a 'mode;'—he relaxes for a while his dreamy studies. The gay undergraduate, dressed in his many colours, loitering about the streets without cap and gown, 'a quiet swaggerer,' or mounted on his charger, 'ready, aye, ready for the field,'—feels his blood career more rapidly through his veins. And even the studious undergraduate, whose time is divided between

hard reading and long ‘constitutionals ;’—even he becomes less intent on his abstruse subjects, and forgets for a while his Aristotelic mysteries, and seems to have some enjoyment in existence. Then, as the Long Vacation approaches, amusements thicken. Boat-races, pic-nics, land parties, water parties, cricket matches, concerts, the Commemoration, lady visitors, marriage engagements, ices, iced champagne, supper parties in honour of taking degrees—these allurements are enough to seduce a Stoic from the path of duty. Nor must it be forgotten, in connection with our narrative, that, lurking beneath these jollities, lies often unheeded the snake of accumulating debt—*Latet anguis in herbá*. This period of all others brings on that stubborn malady which was dreaded by the old man in the play—the *ἵππικὴ νόσος*¹—the ‘galloping consumption’ of money, or *tic.doloureux* ; this term of all others, after a residence of three years, sends a youth home to the bosom of an affectionate family with a disturbed constitution and a sack-full of unpaid bills—*Hoc tu, Romane, caveto*.

To an illustration of ‘the way the money goes’ in the middle of an Oxford June, this chapter will be devoted. Kind reader, are you

¹ Aristophanes, ‘Clouds,’ p. 224.

‘very virtuous,’ affirming that there shall be ‘no more cakes and ale;’ are your nerves very sensitive, so that you shrink from a moderate uproar; or is your taste very delicate? Then, pass on to the next chapter. This is inserted as the teetotaler introduces his ‘example,’ or as the Spartan exhibited his inebriated slave. It is descriptive of an Oxford Supper Party before the Long Vacation.

‘Gentlemen! I ask you to fill a bumper. I have to propose to you a health which will call forth your warmest acclamations—that of our host Dolman. (Loud applause.) He has now completed his academical career, and he will leave a blank behind him when he goes away. (Hear, hear.) He will leave a name, too, behind, though it will not be found high in the class-list or among the catalogue of prize-men like our distinguished friend Monkhouse here; but he will not be soon forgotten as the stroke of our racing boat, and a first-rate player in our cricket club. (Cheers.) He will be remembered, too, by us all as a jolly good fellow, up to any kind of fun, abundant in scrapes, and successful in getting out of them. I give you Dolman’s good health (long continued applause); and I am entitled to call upon Lacy for a song.’ (Loud cheers.)

BACCHANALIAN SONG.

Come, fill up your glasses, boys, till they run over,
 Here's the health of a jolly good fellow, our host :
 Wine gives wit to the stupid, a smile to the lover,
 To the poor man abundance, and hope to the lost.
 The lore of the Grecian
 Fair Bacchus can teach one,
 Far better than any old muff of them a',
 Then with heigh! ho! and holloa!
 Come, follow, boys, follow,
 And let the roof ring with your hip! hip! hurrah!

Away with your tragedy, comedy, chorus,
 And dialogue, tag-rag and bobtail, away!
 For why should these lecturers bully and bore 'us
 Youth' with their poetry, epic, and play?
 Away with that Orson;
 That bear of a Porson;
 And Elmsley and Gaisford to Tartarus fling:
 Why think on such asses?
 Come, fill up your glasses—
 For wine is the tippie of Helicon's spring.

Just look at that tallow-faced, sickly Examiner,
 With a visage as long and as grave as a mute;
 With his Ethics and Logic that youth he is cramming, sir,
 As you fatten a turkey or physic a brute.
 Oh, Zeno and Plato,
 A peel of potato
 Is worth all your quips and your quiddities round;
 You're a fool, Aristotle;
 In the bottle, the bottle,
 Your grand *summum bonum* will ever be found.

Why talk of your authors, your models of history,
 Herodotus, Xenophon, Thucydides?
 Come, listen to me, I'll unravel the mystery
 Of inviting, and writing, and thinking with ease.

Would you follow the rules
 Of antiquity's schools?
 Fudge! I tell you, my hearties, the way in good sooth:
 Drink your goblet of wine,
 Look within—there will shine,
 Reflected, the image of genius and truth.

And then for your Rhetoric, speech-making, spouting,
 Why seek among rubbish of Latin and Greek?
 Demostheues, Cicero, bullying, flouting!
 Believe me, they're nothing but bubble and squeak.
 But Whately, Quintilian!
 Heaven help thee, silly one;
 All such crazy old bores in thy dust-cellar roll;
 Here is Burgundy, Claret—
 Come, sober one, share it—
 It is wine that inspirits the orator's soul.

Then fill up your glasses until they run over,
 Here's the health of a jolly good fellow, our host!
 Wine gives wit to the stupid, a smile to the lover,
 To the poor man abundance, and hope to the lost.
 The love of the Grecian
 Fair Bacchus can teach one,
 Far better than any old muff of them a',
 Then with heigh! ho! and holloa!
 Come, follow, boys, follow;
 And let the roof ring with your hip! hip! hurrah! •

'Gentlemen,' said Dolman, 'I am proud to see you all at my table, and prouder still for the cause that has brought us together. (Hear.) I assure you I have had some proud moments in my life-time, but none equal to that when I found that I had escaped unscathed from those awful-looking examiners, whose countenances I shall remember as long as I live.

(Laughter.) Gentlemen, I wish you all your very good health; and I do not doubt that younger men will rise up to take the stroke oar of our boat and the ball in our cricket club better than myself. (No, no.) I wish you all, gentlemen, a pleasant Long Vacation; and, as many of us are now parting for the last time, some of us to distinguish ourselves in our several callings (laughter), I wish you all health, happiness, and prosperity, amiable wives, thriving olive-branches, and an easy voyage down the stream of life.' (Loud cheers.)

Let us take a glance round Dolman's table. There were some thirty or forty guests; and, as the host had always kept up a large acquaintance, it may be assumed that his friends were of a very miscellaneous character. Some were reading men, some were idle men, some were fast men. The assemblage was a promiscuous one. He who proposed Dolman's health was a very tall, thin man, called Sankey, known as a person of considerable property, and as having a thorough faith in Platonism. Indeed, from his almost invisible thinness and his metaphysical peculiarities, he was called 'the Platonic idea.' A fresh tutor once called him Lanky by mistake. The singer was a character also. He was remarkable for his extreme indolence. His name was Lacy, but

in common parlance it was changed into Lazy. The slightest physical exertion was to him an enormous toil. His trunks remained unpacked from vacation to vacation; he would as soon have thought of reducing to order the primeval atoms of Lucretius as his own luggage. Nay, he was too idle to cleanse himself like a decent being. Of all liquids water was his aversion, whether applied externally or internally. He went so far as to hate Pindar because of his *ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ* saying. But, against these undesirable properties, we must mention others that made him a much-valued guest. He had an inexhaustible fund of wit and humour; he was a perfect mimic and a fluent speaker; he sang an excellent song, and had an extraordinarily keen perception of the ridiculous. He was known to be very boastful and very cowardly. He 'was not only witty in himself, but the cause of wit in others;' and with all his failings he was a pleasant companion—at a supper-table, and at a distance.

'Mr. Chairman and gentlemen,' said Lacy, 'I believe it is my privilege to have the call for a song. Before I do so, however, let me propose the health of a body of men whom we are so soon to lose—who, full-fledged, are on the point of rising on their wings and flying away—the Bachelors of this term. (Hear, hear.)

There is yourself, sir, so celebrated in the gymnastics and good-feeling of your academical career; there is Shorland, who, though a native of Yarndale, has never been known to drop an "h" (*Shorland*: Hold your tongue, you dirty rogue, or I will drop *you*); and there is Monkhouse, whose philosophical and classical attainments have placed him amongst the foremost of our graduates. (Cheers.) Let me propose to you the health of our graduating Bachelors; and reciprocating your wish, sir, may you all, though bachelors now, become happy in beautiful wives and numerous progenies. (Laughter and cheers.) I beg to call upon our friend Joyce for a song.' (Cries, 'Knock him down.')

The healths were drank, and thanks duly returned. Joyce was at once knocked down for a song. He was a very short and stout fellow, whose face betokened good-humour rather than intellect. He had a hearty laugh for a joke, and a fair voice for a song. He entertained the company with—

A HOMERIC BALLAD.

In that golden time when the world was in its prime,
And men were rich without buying and selling,
There lived a young philander whose name was Alexander,
And a pretty married woman called Helen.
With a whack fal-al (*ad infinitum*).

Come, Alic, some *day as* may suit, says Menelaus,
 Dine, and take a dish of tea as well ;
 He came punctual very, ate his tarts and drank his sherry,
 And then he ran away with his Nell.
 With a whack, &c.

Holloa, my brave boys, bold Menelaus cries,
 Come, neighbours, and let us be arter ;
 Let us teach this imp of evil in future to be civil,
 Nor elope with one's wife or darter.
 With a whack, &c.

My stars, says Sergeant Jove, a surly old cove,
 The Inspector of Rural Police ;
 What a row and a cry are there on the plains of Troy,
 Some Chartist procession I would guess.
 With a whack, &c.

Lie still, says he to Juno, it's all stuff and nonsense, *you know*,
 Old woman, be quiet and cosey ;
 Come, none of that, old man, I'll see what's a going on,
 If I don't, says Juno, blow 'me.
 With a whack, &c.

Then up she arose, and hurried on her clothes,
 And laced her stays with her garter ;
 Then policemen Apollo and Mars she told to follow,
 With Diana, in a jiffey arter.
 With a whack, &c.

When Sergeant Jove arose at ten from his snooze,
 And donned his white-lettered collar,
 As he stood on the hill of Olympus, what a mill
 Did he see below in the holler !
 With a whack, &c.

He saw Hector with a spear prick Patroclus in the rear,
 And Ajax pummelled to a jelly ;
 He saw Venus in the chase get a smack on the face,
 And his wife get a kick on the belly.
 With a whack, &c.

Then up he sprang in wrath, and he swore a mighty oath,
 By the wig of Chief Justice Tindall,
 That every man Jack and woman in a crack
 To Newgate and the treadmill he would bundle.
 With a whack, &c.

MORAL.

Ye lively young sparks, contemplating your larks !
 Just remember young Master Alexander ;
 Whom his mother put to bed with a broken leg and head,
 Who was ducked twice in the Scamander.
 With a whack, &c.

Young wives with notions fickle, just remember Helen's pickle,
 And be wise in time, my pretty dears ;
 Lest your husbands with a shout call their neighbours from
 about,
 And bring a hornet's nest about your ears.
 With a whack, &c.

Old ladies, in a riot, pray lie comfortable and quiet,
 Nor from your husbands' arms wish to fly ;
 Lest going to the windy to witness the shindy,
 You get a stone on your stomach or your eye.
 With a whack, &c.

Thus the toast and the song alternated, with regular interludes of shouting and cheering. It will suffice to have given a sample of the oratory and poetry that prevailed. Perhaps it would have been better not to have adventured on the description of such a scene at all, but having been begun, it must be faithfully depicted unto the end. And really there is nothing novel in such exhibitions. They are enacted now in every tavern and in some dining-rooms,

as well as under college roofs, precisely as they are described by Xenophon (*Cyr. Inst.*): ‘In very truth, I was afraid lest poison had been poured into the cup. And how, I pray, replied Astyages, did you discover that? Because, said Cyrus, I saw you plainly faltering both in mind and body. For you all shouted at the same time, nor did you gain a single idea from one another. You were singing also, and that too most ridiculously. And though each boasted of his own strength, when you rose up to dance, so far from being able to dance in time, you were not even able to stand erect.’

The sounds grew louder and more indistinct, though no one perceived the transition; time passed on, though no one was conscious of its progress, and twelve o’clock arrived, but how, no one knew or cared. At that time the mirth or madness was at its zenith; at that time heads, deans, tutors, were no more than ordinary mortals; lectures were forgotten, and Greek and Roman authors among things that were—*Troja fuit*—

Wi’ quaffing and laughing
They ranted and they sang;
Wi’ jumping and thumping
The vera girdle rang.

CHAPTER V.

THE STORM ABATING.

ONE o'clock came, and the room described in the last chapter was for the most part cleared of its living occupants. The scene of confusion was transferred to the Quadrangle. Senior fellows quailed in their easy chairs, and the porter trembled in his lodge. At that dread hour an obnoxious tutor would have been tarred and feathered with as little compunction as an American lynches an acquitted culprit, or an Irishman peels a potato or shoots a bailiff.

Such was the tumult, but the worst remains to be told. All this was going on near the Principal's house, nay, much of it under his very bed-room windows. Imagine, then, his feelings. Impressed with the strictest notions of gentlemanly refinement, he was shocked if a word was ever heard in the Quadrangle above the ordinary pitch of conversation; but now, to find this sacred precinct turned into a bear-garden, and that too at his very door! Zounds! no plummet could sound the depth of his indig-

nation. Long he debated with his presidential dignity whether he should leave his bed; long he assuaged his fury by meditating 'most horrible revenge' in the morning. At length, however, that powerful stimulant, anger, carried all before it; fear, dignity, present ease, all were scattered like dust before the whirlwind, and with the wrath of a chafed lion he arose, called up his three men-servants, and proceeded towards the scene of turbulence.

On emerging into the Quadrangle, the first party that intercepted his progress was a group of five. Sankey, or the 'Platonic idea'—or, as some styled him from the definition of Euclid, 'length without breadth'—was standing as stiff, still, and upright as a halbert; his arms were hanging closely by his side, his eyes were steadfastly fixed upon the stars, and his mind seemed lost in intense abstraction; around him the remaining four were dancing with joined hands, and laughing with the frantic laughter of little children.

'Mr. Sankey,' sneered the Principal, seeing him towering above the rest like a tall cedar, 'what is this disgraceful exhibition I see here?'

'Why, sir,' answered the other, stepping forward with the action of a mountebank, and bending his long body into the form of a semi-circle, while the other four crept away under

the shadow of the building, 'to speak, sir, in verity and truth, we are worshippers of the times gone by, and keeping up the good old custom of dancing round a maypole, of which I am the representative. I hold it to be, sir, the mark of an ignoble mind not—'

'You have said quite enough,' the Principal retorted snappishly; 'you would be better in bed than acting the fool here.'

'Yes, sir,' returned Sankey, still bowing like a willow shaken by the wind, 'yes, I grant bed is excellent in its kind, and I thoroughly agree in the benediction of Sancho Panza, "Blessed be that man who first invented sleep;" but still—'

'Your conduct, sir, must be explained in the morning,' was the last retort of the Head, who was in no humour to argue a point of propriety.

On leaving Sankey, the Principal hurried on to the room whence all the tumult had originated. The different groups of brawlers shrank from him as from a moonlight spectre; and he, being so intent on discovering the mighty delinquent, allowed them to escape. Joyce, however, the corpulent singer of the Homeric ballad, most unfortunately confronted him in his progress. Our fat friend was struggling to reach his room, but, like a hundred-gun frigate beating up the Channel against a sharp north-

wester, he was tacking and rolling in all directions. Though he saw the Principal right ahead, he was obliged to drift where the winds and waters bore him, for rudder he had none; and the consequence was that he moved alongside the great man with the 'short uneasy motion' of a vessel taking in passengers in a rough sea.

'Mr. Joyce!' shouted the Head, who was in imminent peril of being run down, like a wherry before a West Indiaman, 'Mr. Joyce!'

'Yes, sir,' responded Joshua—for that was his Christian name—still sailing on his tack. His momentum was uncontrollable for a few yards, and the process of casting out his anchor somewhat slow; so, as he moved majestically by, he returned the Principal's salutation by a laconic 'yes, sir,' in a tone drowsy and tipsy, but intended to be respectful.

'Mr. Joyce, are you not ashamed of your condition and conduct?' asked the Head, with as much acrimony as intonation could express.

'Ye-es, sir,' replied Joshua, in the same hiccuping tone, for he had only one just then; nor, indeed, had he any superfluous command of words.

'You would be far better in bed, sir, than displaying here the worst properties of the beast,' rejoined the Principal, who, if asked,

would perhaps have found some difficulty in pointing out the likeness between the worst properties of a quadruped and the condition of Joshua Joyce as it then was; but as he laid especial stress on the last word it expressed all he meant.

‘Ye-es, sir,’ responded Joshua, with a heroic grunt of self-condemnation; ‘ye-es, sir; all right, sir’—and then setting himself again in motion, he pitched heavily towards his own haven.

It would require no ordinary power of description to convey an adequate idea of the state of Dolman’s room when the Principal arrived there. It was filled with a dense cloud of smoke, perfectly impenetrable to the eye. The lights were just glimmering in the sockets of the candlesticks, and at any time would only have served to render darkness visible; now they were a mockery of light, and every flicker seemed a prelude to the undivided reign of darkness, desolation, and terror. On a long dining-table was scattered a most promiscuous assortment of punch-bowls, tumbler-glasses, wine-glasses, china-jugs, glass-jugs, plates, cigars, tobacco-boxes, meerschaums, clays, all in the most consistent disorder. Chair-legs might have been seen in one corner of the room, chair-backs in another. An overturned

table lay in the midst of glasses, bottles, knives, forks, and crockery that had fallen with it. Spittoons upside down had sprinkled their sawdust on every side, and broken caps, tattered gowns, mutilated books—*Danaum exuvie*—were strewn upon the floor in all directions. The very elements of arrangement were dissolved; the scene seemed the personation of disorder; and the Principal, on first coming into sight of it, might have properly exclaimed with Othello, ‘Chaos is come again!’

So much for what is termed the still life of the apartment. Where is the sad delinquent, the host of the evening? At one end of the room Dolman lay extended on his rumpled sofa. He was without coat, without waistcoat, with his shirt open in front, and after all in a ‘burning quotidian tertian.’ He was trying the range of his gamut in a song entitled ‘The Little Pigs.’ Such a scene, alas! gives rise to no poetical feeling; but many who are not very imaginative would, on seeing it, have called to mind Milton’s description of another, with ‘tumult and confusion all embroiled,’ and have likened the host of the evening to the supreme president of that ‘eternal anarchy.’

‘Mr. Dolman!’ shouted the Principal, who stood at the doorway, but avoided the interior

of the room with religious horror, 'Mr. Dolman, I say!'

'That's right, old boy,' retorted Dolman, in a drowsy tone; 'try it on—try it on; I'm not to be done by your foolery; "O the old sow would an exciseman be!"'

It must be observed that there was a peculiarity in the Principal's mode of speaking, which rendered it easily imitated. Thus Dolman, supposing that some friendly wag was joking with him, and being wishful to show his acuteness in detecting imposture, answered in the above style of indifference.¹

'Mr. Dolman, what do you mean, sir? Must I stand here to be subject to *your* insults?'

'Try it on, try it on, old fellow; no, no,

¹ The incidents related above are certainly not usual in the conduct of the Head of a college, but facts are often as strange as fiction. The Principal here so exasperated was remarkable for his genteel deportment and extreme precision of speech. An unfortunate youth was once reading in chapel the verse, 'Asher continued on the sea-shore, and abode in his breaches' (Judges v. 17), when his pronunciation was the rather comical one, 'Asher abodè in his britchès.' After service the Principal, in manner the most sedate, took him to task, in the presence of other undergraduates, somewhat after this style: 'Sir, do you not know the difference between what are pronounced breaches and britchès? The latter are the lower integuments of a man's clothing; the former are fortresses or fortifications of defence. When you read this verse again, be good enough to remember the distinction. Good-bye, sir;' and taking off his cap in the politest manner, he walked on quietly and solemnly towards the Lodge.

none of your gammon.' And then, as if the last word had suggested the idea, the song was renewed, 'O the little pigs make the best of bacon—bacon.'

On the Principal repeating his command for Dolman to come forward, there was something so fearfully earnest in his tone that there was no mistaking its genuineness. The delinquent, therefore, rose from his recumbent posture, and struggled towards the door. Luckily, however, or unluckily, he found his head giddy on rising, and, after a lilt or two, he twisted round like an inexperienced skater, and moved towards the door back foremost. How far he would have gone in this inverted and unnatural order it is impossible to say, had he not impinged upon the wall with his shoulders. In this posture he had wisdom enough to remain; so there he stood, with his feet some half a yard apart, his arms hanging loosely by his side, his head projecting, his eyes half closed, and his mouth half open, reared up with his back against the wall like a scaling ladder, some three yards from the Principal.

'Mr. Dolman,' said the high authority, giving a practical illustration of the perfection to which the art of sneering may be brought, —'Mr. Dolman, if anything can shame you, your conduct this evening ought to do so.'

‘I’m very well (hiccup), I thank you, sir!’ replied the unfortunate youth, who at once saw that it was the real flesh-and-blood Principal, and devoutly fancied that his answer was strictly pertinent to the remark which had been made.

‘You’re intoxicated, sir; and—and—a discredit to my college.’

‘I’m very well, I thank you, sir,’ hiccupped Dolman, retaining his safe position against the wall, and opening and shutting his eyes with the sapient deliberation of an owl—that bird of Minerva,—‘very well!’

‘In the morning, sir, I shall hear from you how you have been.’

‘I’m *very* well, I thank you, sir!’ repeated the deluded young man, laying this time a peculiar stress on the superlative; but the Principal had left in haste.

During this colloquy—if that can be called colloquy which exchanges words without ideas—two or three of Dolman’s friends were ensconced in an inner chamber. Having had a clearer perception of things than he, they had concealed themselves. When the coast was clear, they emerged from their hiding-place, and found Dolman in precisely the same posture as when he had conferred with the Head.

‘Who do you think has been here?’ he

asked—‘who do you think has been here? Why, the old Principal, and no one else; and what do you think he said to me? Why, he said’—here he threw considerable warmth into his manner of speaking, and raised his arms as in imitation of a man who was offering to shake hands with a friend—‘why, he said, “How do you do, Mr. Dolman?”’ and I said, “Very well, I thank you, sir.” Who would have expected the old fellow to have visited me at this time o’ night?—half-past eleven, I dare say—but I was always a favourite with him, you know. I believe I give a party now and then; but they are always gentlemanly ones—parties in good taste, as the old Principal says—ha! ha!—and there’s no one ever (hiccup) drunk at them, you know.’

‘Well, well; come to bed; it’s quite time.’

‘Very well, very well,’ muttered Dolman to his friends, as he paced along with some difficulty; ‘so be it—so be it; always obedient—always obedient; that’s why I’m such a favourite with all the college dons, is it not?’ Then stepping into bed, after a short undressing, he asked, ‘Was’nt it right kind of the old boy to call upon me?’ And pulling the clothes on him, and making a comfortable nest, he added in a drowsy tone, ‘Mr. Dolman, how do you do?—Very well, I thank you, sir!’

And so his friends 'left him to sleep in his glory.'

But where was Shorland in the uproar? He had left college, on leave, about eleven o'clock, in order to conduct Graham to his hotel; and, as he said, to lead him out of the way of temptation. As, however, it generally happens that the man who is especially anxious for the safe conduct of another after a party, is himself really the one who stands in need of guidance, so here there was no exception to the rule.

'You see,' Shorland rambled on, as the two were pacing up the street; 'you see, these parties get rough, and the room gets hot, and one's head gets rather dizzy. It is not, you know, from anything extraordinary I have taken, but that lobster salad and that champagne at Nuneham were not good for me; somehow I have felt them ever since. Hold up, Graham; are you tripping? Well, perhaps it was myself. Such scenes as we have left may not suit your notions of propriety; so I have brought you away early. Evil communications corrupt good morals—was it?—or mortals? You remember the fine old copy-head, Graham, that we used to write at Yarn-dale. These parties, you know, don't come often; well enough, perhaps, once in a way;

too often wouldn't do. What would the old gentleman in Exchange Street say, think you, if he was to put his head into such a convivial meeting, and saw his hopeful son there, eh, Graham? Come, as you are musical, I'll give you a song, and make these old spires of St. Mary's echo to the tune of "The Friar of Orders Grey."'

Graham heartily wished himself safe in his hotel, and endeavoured to allay the exuberance of Shorland's spirits; but his efforts were ineffectual. He arrested the musical variations, indeed; but the mercurial temperament broke out in a fresh place.

'Yoicks! you blind leaders!' shouted Shorland, as though suddenly impressed with some fresh notion.

This exclamation was addressed to some of those rambling spirits of the night which are always to be found at street corners about eleven o'clock—'Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon'—those undefinable existences which are seen loitering about inn-yards in fur caps and fustian jackets—men-of-all-work and no work—at one time ostlers, at another porters, at another prize-fighters, at another conveyancers—not, in the legal profession, of hereditaments and premises, but, in the illegal one, of pocket-hand-

kerchiefs and purses—men who would sooner fight than eat their dinners, and who would sooner drink or pick a pocket than either. A party of such anomalous beings were leaning against a street corner as Shorland and Graham came up; they were earnest in some discussion, with dry throats and empty pockets, inasmuch as there was a public-house near.

‘Yoicks! you blind leaders!’ repeated Shorland. The expression had become a kind of stock exclamation, from the fact of a certain Jehu undergraduate having construed, in the lecture-room, the passage, ‘Ὁδηγοὶ τυφλοὶ . . . οὐαὶ ὑμῖν,’ ‘Woe unto you, ye blind leaders,’ as ‘Yoicks to you, ye blind leaders!’

Whether the moonlight roamers understood the remark as personal, it is not easy to say; but sure enough the next event of importance was Shorland rolling on the ground, having reached his mother earth from a novel species of locomotion, the moving power being a blow behind the ear. Then arose jeerings and brawlings; then came up several spectators, peacemakers, and men ready to join in the fray; and lo! when the tumult was culminating, the Proctor, with his retinue, unexpectedly turned the corner. Now, it so happened that at this moment Shorland managed to gain his legs; and rushing wildly to the

point where the confusion seemed most confused, regardless of friend or foe, like the blinded Cyclops in his fury, he seized the nearest bystander, who was the Proctor himself. Oh! rash and misguided youth!—what will be the consequence to thee of this ill-omened encounter? Of all the University authorities none possess the same despotic power as the Proctor: simply, then, to come across this exalted personage in such a condition was no light matter; but when there was the probability of an assault upon him into the bargain, the boldest held their breath. Alas! poor Shorland! But lo! to the astonishment of the bystanders, his whole demeanour immediately changed, as he grasped the velvet sleeves, which are the proctorial badge. Whatever train of reasoning passed through his mind, it was evident that his mental process ended in the full conviction that the burden of his arms was a lovely being of the tender sex.

Now, no one could have a truer spirit of gallantry than Shorland. Accordingly, the very instant that this conviction flashed upon his mind, those feelings, which a moment before were raging like *Ætna*, might have been quenched by some superhuman influence. Never did the fury of Neptune so speedily

settle on the appearance of the twin-born offspring of Leda—

Whose starry light
No sooner meets the sailor's anxious sight,
Than ocean's foam sinks from the rocky height—
Than threatening clouds are gone, fierce winds are still,
And the rude sea rests waveless at their will.¹

Then, so soon as peace had come over his mind, another emotion as rapidly succeeded—one of love and adoration. As his arms encircled the ponderous bulk of the puffing Proctor, he no doubt thought that he was clasping some Sabine woman who had come as his mediator and deliverer—*crinibus passis scissâque veste, victo malis muliebri pudore*—or some Dulcinea for whom he was to throw down the gauntlet of defiance. These feelings were embodied and expressed by sundry hugs and squeezes which might have served for the caresses of a polar bear.

‘Leave your hold, sir!’ shouted the Proctor, struggling to release himself.

‘My darling angel!’ responded Shorland, pressing twice as firmly as before.

‘What’s the row?’ inquired some newcomers in a loud voice.

‘Tip it ’em in!’ bawled the loitering vagabonds, who did not understand the nature of

¹ *Hor. Carm.*, i. xii., 27.

the contest, but seeing a disturbance were perfectly satisfied.

The poor Proctor was almost sinking under the pressure; and it is to be feared that he would have been left completely at the mercy of the amorous youth, had he not been rescued by a lucky accident. Shorland, in his eagerness to salute the fancied fair, thrust his eye against the corner of the Proctor's cap, when he relaxed his hold and was removed by the lictors of the great man.

'Take him away—take him away,' ejaculated the Proctor, gasping for breath, like a man struggling for his wind after a severe body-blow—'and—and, marshal, conduct them to their College. And, gentlemen, I shall—I shall—expect to see you at my rooms at ten o'clock to-morrow morning—to-morrow morning—ugh!'

CHAPTER VI.

MORNING AFTER A STORM.

‘SOCRATES, sitting up on the bed’—so writes Plato, and—remember, thou dainty critic, whose stomach is qualmish at the odour of Greek—while the scene is in Oxford, to be classical is only to be consistent,—‘Socrates, sitting up on the bed, bent his leg toward him and rubbed it with his hand, and at the same time that he rubbed it, spoke as follows :—“What a strange thing, my friends, does this appear to be which men call pleasant! how wonderfully is it by nature connected with that which seems to be its contrary, the painful! I say this, inasmuch as they are not willing to be present with a man at the same time; but if any person should pursue the one, and take it, he is almost compelled to receive the other also, just as if the two were joined together from one top. And it appears to me,” he continued, “that Æsop, had he thought of these things, would have made a fable to this effect—that the Deity wishing to reconcile these enemies, but being

unable to do so, joined their tops together, and that on this account wherever one is present, the other also follows immediately after it. So in my own case this seems to be true; for previously there was in my leg a painful feeling by reason of the chain, and the pleasant is consequently succeeding it.”¹

These Socratic reflections are as appropriate now as they were more than two thousand years ago; only in the sequence pleasure seems to be more generally first, and then comes pain. For instance, when youths become boisterous in their mirth overnight, they mostly wake to painful reflections and racking headaches in the morning. Nature must not be overstrained; excess is retributive; it carries its own punishment; like the Yarndale machinery, it is self-acting. Our vices are the ministers that knit together our pleasure and our pain. They tickle us with feathers, and then whip us with scorpions. We have a suitable illustration of this truth in the scene that now meets us in Dolman's room.

‘Is it true,’ said Joyce to Sankey, ‘that the Principal was in the Quadrangle last night, I wonder?’

‘Why,’ replied Sankey, who was clearly as giddy then as he had been the night before—

¹ *Platonis Phædon*, ix. 19.

‘they say so, Joyce—they say so, Joshua—Joshua Joyce, rumour says so; but truth to tell, I am not able to tell the truth. Memory, my good friend, is treacherous, though immortal; and in some future existence perhaps we may call to mind the events of last night, though we cannot now. Knowest thou not, Joshua, that there is a close affinity between whisky punch and the waters of Lethe?’

‘I know,’ responded the other, who was ill at ease both in body and mind, ‘I know that you are an egregious jackass.’

‘Are not you a good judge, friend Joyce, in those long-eared quadrupeds?’

‘Well, I don’t know; but, seriously, I am afraid I met the Principal last night in the Quadrangle. I don’t know for certain; but it is either so, or I dreamt it.’

‘Perhaps, my Patriarch, I met him too; but who cares?’

‘You!’ retorted Joyce, roused into something like good humour by his friend’s banter, and perhaps not sorry to find that there was the probability of another being involved in the same scrape with himself. ‘You!—you Harry long-legs! why, he couldn’t have seen you, if you had met him; he might as well have looked at the edge of a razor.’

‘Well, well—if you had met him, old twenty-

stone, it's a mercy he was not crushed to death by your shadow. Why, what a low-lived coward, what a white-livered craven, thou art, Joshua, to be afraid of a man called a Principal, who is not half thy weight! But what can be the matter with Dolman? He takes an hour in dressing. Dolman! Dolman! My Adonis, come forth in the beauty of thy adornments; show thyself in thine elegant apparel.'

Dolman soon after appeared, and found Sankey stalking about and slapping his long legs by way of showing his independence, while Joyce was laid up in an easy chair. One by one others dropped in, considerably mystified in their memory of what had occurred on the preceding night. Conjectures were hazarded, but nothing was known for certain. After a while Lacy entered; he was in high glee; he had made himself acquainted, as was his wont on such occasions, with all the stray, straggling news of the morning, and related it with marvellous volubility. He told Sankey of his may-pole exhibition—on which he was bidden in reply to go and wash his face; he narrated to Joyce the jeopardy in which he had placed the Head—to which no answer was designed; he gave a vivid description of the concluding scene in Dolman's room, mimicking, with considerable unction, the 'How do you do,

Mr. Dolman?' and the 'I'm very well, I thank you, sir.' He did not forget to tell them also, by the way, that he had himself escaped detection; 'though you know,' he added, 'it is a matter immaterial—a thing indifferent—I would almost have rather shared the danger with my friends. The fun! the excitement! the glory! Besides, the Head is a gentlemanly, pleasant man, and—'

'Hear him!' exclaimed Sankey—'palaver, palaver—blarneying the Principal! Soap, sir—soap.'

'Soap!' retorted Lacy with strong emphasis, his indignation swelling at the charge—'no—I *despise soap*.'

This was a proposition in which all present implicitly concurred, though not exactly in the sense in which it was intended; literally it was a self-evident truth.

'Why, who doubted it?' asked Dolman—'mayn't you add, cold water and looking-glasses?'

'Looking-glasses! What have I to do with looking-glasses?'

'Very little,' answered several.

'Well, why do you talk to me about looking-glasses? and why have you kept staring at me in this way ever since I entered the room?'

'Will you please,' said Dolman, 'just to walk

into the bedroom there, and have a peep at your ugly face, you dirty fellow? You havn't seen yourself for a week, I'm sure, and you may have lost your nose in that time.'

The circumstance that gave rise to these jeers must be told. Lacy had fallen asleep on the previous night not long before the company separated; and some wicked fellows had taken it into their wild heads to burn a cork and paint upon his face unseemly figures—grotesque geometrical symbols, circles, triangles, and quadrilaterals, ellipses, and hyperboles—not very symmetrically drawn—so that he seemed to bear on his lofty frontispiece the various schemata of Euclid, and many of the curves in Conic Sections. Now, as it was notorious—first, that he had not a looking-glass in his room—secondly, that he had a hydrophobic detestation of cold water—and lastly, that he despised soap, it was no difficult matter to solve the problem, how these insignia still garnished his face when he came into Dolman's room.

'The man that did this shall rue his ears off!' shouted the infuriated youth, when he discovered the cabalistic strokes on his countenance—'he shall, by—by—by all that's true'—here he looked valorous. 'I know who it was—I'm sure I do;' and then, as if some recollec-

tion had suddenly come across his mind, he subdued his tone of revenge: 'Good gracious! I met the Principal as I came across Quad; what shall I do? I'm found out—what will become of us?'

'Oh,' said Dolman, 'remember the fun! the excitement! the glory!'

'No, no, I'm not afraid,' gasped Lacy, as if each word had been a marble in his throat—'only—'

'Bother your "only,"' struck in Sankey; 'what matters it? Won't it be all the same a hundred years hence, when your spirit has entered perhaps into the body of a pig, and you are digging your snout into a dunghill? For the present, away; get you to your rooms; borrow a towel, some water and soap, and wash your face; away, you knight of the black visage and white liver! The Principal's servant, I see through the window, is crossing Quad with a list of the attainted in his hand, and he is now coming in this direction, to summon us, no doubt, into the august presence of the authorities. So "now, my masters, happy man be his dole."'

There is something painful in suspense at all times; and there is probably no suspense more painful than that of a culprit awaiting his sentence. In such a psychological condition

many of the roysterers of the preceding night now appear. They are standing in the Principal's library, a large sombre judgment-hall, with small windows and heavy furniture; and around the table at the top of the room are seated some half-dozen of the College Dons, who have been summoned to give a solemnity to the judicial proceedings. Can any condition be much worse than that of waiting in the presence of such a dignified body for the three minutes before an expected scolding?—

'Tis as if the general pulse
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause,
An awful pause, prophetic of its end.

Would it not be worse to watch the operator as he sharpens his instrument than to endure the operation itself?

'Mr. Dolman,' said the Principal, at length breaking the disagreeable silence, 'I address you, for in your room, it appears, the discreditable proceedings of last night commenced. It is a matter of extreme regret that I should have to send for you on such an occasion, now that you have just taken your Bachelor's Degree, and are so soon to leave the University; but the noise and rioting last night were so unseemly, and the state of many of the Undergraduates was so disgraceful, that I must take cognizance of the matter, even though the

term is now drawing to a close, and some latitude might perhaps be permitted to friends on the eve of their separation. Have you any excuse to offer, Mr. Dolman ?’

It was evident that the Principal’s wrath had somewhat abated since the previous night. Perhaps he felt conscious that he had not himself pursued the most dignified course in going out into the Quadrangle at such an hour and in the midst of such riotous scenes. He may have called to mind also that he had not his wonted power over a culprit who was now on the point of leaving college. Besides, Dolman who was a highly honourable, though an unfortunate youth, had always been a favourite of his, notwithstanding the sundry little passages of arms that had from time to time passed between them.

‘Well, sir,’ said Dolman, very humbly, ‘I regret very much that this should have occurred. The truth is, many of us had been lunching at Nuneham, and we were more or less fatigued with rowing. Then I, as one of the Bachelors, have soon to leave the College, where most of us have passed our time so—’ here he hesitated between the words ‘profitably’ and ‘pleasantly,’ mixing the two somewhat amusingly till they became a kind of half-and-half—‘and this may have led us into some excess. I assure you,

sir, I cannot express my regret too strongly for the noise that proceeded from my rooms.'

A short pause here ensued.

'Pray, Mr. Sankey, did I see you last night?' inquired an elderly gentleman who was seated near the Principal. He was a Senior Fellow, a person well known, yet known for no other property than that of having the longest face in the University, together with a nose which in longitude exceeded all proportion to the rest of his features. Mouth, he might as well have had none; for, except in such matters as eating and drinking, it was a superfluity. He spoke with his nose; he preached with his nose; he sang with his nose. It resembled an elephant's proboscis, and might have been an inverted speaking-trumpet attached to his mouth. He frequently held the office of College chaplain, when he literally 'lifted up his voice like a trumpet.' His chief characteristics were slowness of movement, good nature, and a degree of timidity, which sometimes, notwithstanding his estimable qualities, made him the subject of sport among the Undergraduates.

'Had we an interview last night, Mr. Sankey?' snuffed the Senior Fellow.

'Most probably,' answered the other, subduing his giddy manner; 'I am sorry to think that I was about the Quadrangle last night.'

‘No, no—I do not mean that. Did I see you in my room last night?’

‘In your room, sir,’ replied Sankey, apparently surprised at the question, and endeavouring to look as reminiscent as he was able in the present scattered state of his ideas—‘I conceive, sir, that you are under a mistake.’

No more was said on that head. The Senior Fellow whispered with the Dean, who sat next him, and the Dean whispered with the Senior Fellow; and some conclusion was arrived at between them by the nodding of their heads, but whether in the negative or affirmative it is not material to inquire.

The events which gave rise to the preceding short dialogue, may be narrated briefly. About twelve o’clock on the night before, the Senior Fellow and the Dean were sitting together in the room of the former, taking a quiet cup of coffee. From the remote situation of the room they knew nothing of the tumult without. The Dean was busily engaged in reading the account of a murder in his favourite newspaper. The Fellow of one feature was nodding fast towards ‘the land of drowsenhead’ in his easy chair. Juvenal mentions a man who was able to ‘snore with a waking nose’—*vigilanti stertere naso*—a strange phrase certainly, but one which, with some change of the original

meaning, will not inappropriately apply to our reverend Senior, whose mind might have been journeying to a distance, while his nose was keeping sentry. Thus stood matters in the Fellow's room at the time mentioned, when, lo! a tall thin figure opened the door without knocking, strode up to their table, threw its right leg over the head of one as it would a flail, stepped a yard further, threw its left leg over the head of the other, turned its back on them without uttering a syllable, tucked its coat-skirts one under each arm, displaying proportions by no means the most elegant, and marched out of the room as upright and stately as a grenadier, and as silent as the indignant ghost of the injured Dido.

‘Bless my life!’ ejaculated the Dean, dropping his newspaper, as if he had been the murdered man about whom he was reading, thrusting his spectacles on to his forehead, and fixing his eyes on the receding figure—‘bless my life! did you see anything?’

The Senior Fellow was petrified. The creaking of the door partly roused him from his slumbers, and as the long leg flew over his head he expected nothing less than that some goblin was intending to dance a minuet on his nose. He gaped towards the door for a few seconds after the apparition's departure, gave

two or three snorts through his speaking-trumpet, and rose, in college phraseology, to 'sport his oak,' without uttering an articulate sound.

'It looked very like that long Undergraduate called Sankey, or Lanky,' said the Dean; 'but he can't be such a madman; he is a quiet, orderly, well-behaved man, judging from the chapel-list.'

'I don't know who it was, or what it was,' snuffled the other; 'at all events, it was after no good.'

It remains a mystery to this day what this strange apparition was. Sankey, however, has been heard to say that he had an indistinct recollection of something of the kind; though from his Platonic theory of reminiscence he attributed it to events in a previous state of being.

Here the Principal again took the lead. He was evidently not anxious to press heavily upon the culprits. He knew that the occasion of the excess was not one of every day, and perhaps he remembered some far-away scenes of a similar kind and on a similar occasion in his own youthful days. With a little objurgation he mingled much good advice, and after giving to each a nominal imposition, he dismissed them in a spirit not unkindly.

Monkhouse, who was not of course one of those who had been summoned, went to Dolman's room after his return to learn the result of the council-meeting. 'I'm so glad you're come,' said Dolman; 'you're the very man I wanted. I am nonplussed with my imposition.'

'What is it?'

'Why the song I was singing last night is to be turned into Doric Greek verse.'

'And what song were you singing?'

'"The Little Pigs."'

'Does the Principal know it is such elegant poetry?'

'No, he only said "the melody I was singing;" for we found him in a much more agreeable humour than I expected.'

'"The Little Pigs" into Doric Greek verse!' said Monkhouse, laughing; 'into what metre—eh? Into Græcum Tragicum iambicum acatalecticum, did he say, or what?'

'He said nothing about iambicums or acatalecticums; he only said, "Doric Greek verse."'

Dolman's metrical ideas were neither extensive nor profound. He was like the Aristophanic Strepsiades, who, when questioned on his knowledge of the metres, replied that in his opinion a half-pint was the best of all metres.¹

¹ *The Clouds*, l. 630.

‘ Well, begin, then,’ said Monkhouse, anxious to see the result of Dolman’s inspiration.

‘ “ The Little Pigs ” into Doric Greek verse !’ muttered Dolman ; ‘ it will prove above my hand considerably, I guess ; let me see—how does it begin ?—

The old sow would a philosopher be—
 Be, be, high diddle dee—
 The old sow would a philosopher be—
 Lillibulero, lillibulero, &c.
 For Johnny’s a lusty young man—
 Man, man, high diddle dan—
 For Johnny’s a lusty young man.

Well, I never thought,’ he continued, ‘ that “ The Little Pigs ” was such nonsense before. What the devil is the Doric Greek for “ high diddle dee,” and “ lillibulero ” ? Neither Alcæus nor Sappho, I fancy, ever sang anything like “ The Little Pigs.” Come, Monkhouse, sit down—it won’t take you twenty minutes to turn it, in some way or other ; and I will give you the English.’

Monkhouse soon translated the first stanza, which was as follows, and may be taken as a fair specimen of the rest—

‘ *Α σῦς γὰρ ἂν φιλόσοφος ἦ—*
 Ἦ, ἦ, εἰ διδδὲλ δῆ—
 ‘ *Α σῦς γὰρ ἂν φιλόσοφος ἦ—*
 Λιλλιβουληρῶ, λιλλιβουληρῶ, κ.τ.λ.
 Ἰωάννης γὰρ ἔντι κράτιστος ἄρβαν—
 ‘Ραν, βαν, εἰ διδδὲλ δαν—
 Ἰωάννης γὰρ ἔντι κράτιστος ἄρβαν.

During this process of metrical gestation, Shorland entered the room. He had escaped the meshes inside the College only to be caught in the net outside. He had just returned from the Proctor's room, and was in high spirits. He related to his friends the unlucky incidents of the previous night, after he had left College, and what passed at his morning's interview with the great man. 'I apologised to him,' said Shorland, 'for my unintentional discourtesy, and I excused myself on the ground of having been overtaken with wine before I knew it. He has the character of being a good-natured little fellow, you know, and he behaved very kindly to me. He gave me some good advice, now that I am leaving College; and when I expressed my hope that I had not shown him any personal rudeness, he remarked with a kind of chuckle that he carried upon him *the marks of my affection*, and he wished me good morning.'

'Good bye to Oxford,' ruminated Graham, as he was starting for Yarndale. 'I am heartily glad this journey is likely to end so well. Mr. Frederick's debts were not so heavy, after all; and the tradesmen were liberal enough in their discounts. Mr. Shorland will be sulky for a time with his son; but I think he will come round before long. A wild life certainly do

some of these young fellows lead; but I have come in, no doubt, for the rioting, after the reading. There is, however, in these men a high sense of honour; a mean act, I find, would not be tolerated; much that would pass muster as clever in Yarndale would be scouted here. How, I wonder, will Mr. Frederick get on in his native city after his Oxford training? Never mind, time will show; there is the ring of the sterling metal about him, I am quite sure.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST STAGE FROM OXFORD.

FEW years pass away with more seeming rapidity than those of an Undergraduate, assuming that he so lives as not to be guilty of any gross breach of youthful decorum. Some young men, it is true, so misemploy that period as to hamper themselves for the remainder of their life by their extravagance and folly. But he who maintains, throughout his academical course, the character of a prudent man and a gentleman, even if he be not distinguished for scholastic attainments, passes his three or four years at College with profit to himself, and ever after associates with his recollections of an Undergraduate's life emotions of pleasure and pride.

Not but that a young gentleman in this state of pupilage has his grievances. Doubtless, he is sometimes tempted to exclaim with Christophero Sly, ' 'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady; would 't were done.' Daily attendance at lectures teaches him his inferiority

of station; tutorial impositions are strong practical arguments in proof of his bondage; the common sorrows of the world, too, penetrate within College walls. Still his spirits are youthful and elastic; the ordinary miseries of life bound from them as the ball springs from the bat or the cue; and he takes his leave of Alma Mater with a vivid recollection of the sweets she has administered, and an almost forgetfulness of the bitters.

On taking leave, however, of College, and laying aside the Undergraduate's gown, feelings of a serious character will rise instinctively in the hearts of most—feelings which the buoyant spirits of youth may conceal from observation, but which are still flowing on like the rivulet shrouded from the eye by copse and brushwood. This period is the crisis of a young man's life. His vision hitherto has been bounded by the end of his academical career; if studious, he has looked forward to his honours; if unambitious, simply to his degree. *Now* the whole of life stretches before him, and he has mostly to select the road on which he intends to travel; he has to lay aside much that sat not ungracefully perhaps on the Undergraduate, but which would ill become the man assuming mature responsibilities. On his choice of a profession or mode of life, it will

greatly depend, whether he fail in his future career, or become useful in his generation—whether he be a benefactor of his species, or a selfish cumberer of the ground—a worker for good, or a drone in the hive of society.

Not that every young gentleman assumes the character of a stern moralist the moment he puts on his Bachelor's gown: some, doubtless, take a little time for snatches of easy reflection before they engage in the hard battle of life; and this probably will be the case with one or two vivacious Graduates to whom we have been lately introduced.

Dolman, Shorland, and Monkhouse are now in the railway carriage, on their way to Yarn-dale; they are purposing, however, to stay a night at Warwick, where the Royal Agricultural Society is holding its annual meeting. Monkhouse had engaged to meet his father there. Both parent and son had just been declared winners of prizes. Sir Richard had carried off the blue riband for the best short-horned bull, and his son the day before had been announced as the successful competitor for one of the open Fellowships in Oxford. Dolman and Shorland were by no means unwilling to have a glance at our brave yeomen of England and the stock they produced.

‘Good morning, gentlemen,’ said a fellow-

passenger, with a strong foreign accent ; ‘ hope you are vare well ! ’ and he settled himself down into his seat, arranging himself for comfort with the precision of an experienced traveller.

The stranger was a man of about five feet four inches in height ; but for his deficiency in that attribute of the physical man, he was compensated by a breadth and rotundity which might have made him an inconvenient companion in the old stage-coach. He proved to be a native of Germany, and had been brought up at one of the Universities there ; but from want of any profession at home, he had turned professional traveller abroad, and, from a residence in and locomotion through many countries for many years, his accent, without being ascribable to any one locality in particular, was flavoured with something peculiar to each. He was a man of acute observation and amusing anecdote, and considerable intellect glimmered from his eyes, which were deeply set in his somewhat obese features. Though constitutionally good-tempered, he evinced all the irascibility of a seasoned traveller. He scolded the porters, who in return laughed at his broken English. He refused to satisfy any exorbitant demand, while really he was of a generous and liberal disposition.

‘Grand city, Oxford,’ he continued—‘vare magnifique — England, noble country — vare superb—fine cities, fine fields, fine men, fine women—and, more than all, fine hotels. De inn is beyond all nations accommodating—pay your money—get anything—eat well—drink well—sit at ease—smoke meerschaum.’

Is not the German right in his praise of the English inn? It is true that we may occasionally have some unpleasant entomological memories of an hotel; it is true that we may be startled now and then out of a delicious sleep by the tramping of heavy-footed porters there; it is true that a man’s misdeeds never rise up before him with such palpable embodiment and power as in the multifarious items of a tavern bill. Still the inn has its peculiar enjoyments. Where is a man so completely the monarch of all he surveys as in an hotel? Is it not Washington Irving, the inimitable, who in one of his sketches revels in this idea? ‘Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?’ was the indignant inquiry of the fat knight. *Mine* ease! *mine* inn! How many thousand owners has a well-frequented hostelry during the three hundred and sixty-five days and nights in a year! And each for the time being arrogates the possession of it—if not *de jure*, at least *de facto*—with more than the tenacity which at-

taches to ancient inheritance or vested rights. He is as tenacious of it as he is of his ease—let selfishness be the test. Where is a man so unfettered and independent as in his inn? His dominion is unrestrained by the equal—and sometimes more than equal—claims of a wife; his bidding is uncontrolled by the despotism of a housekeeper; his wishes are unthwarted by the sauciness of a cook. He can sprawl his feet on the fender without the fear of a conjugal monition. He can stir up the fire without the presentiment that he is increasing the amount of his quarter's coal-bill. He can ring the bell for dinner at eight o'clock without the apprehension of turning his servants sulky. He can call for his wine and a liberal paper; and as he is luxuriating in independence and bullying the waiter, what a glow of sympathy does he feel with the unfortunate Poles and with all the suffering nationalities of the earth!

'Yes,' said Dolman, 'the English inn is a very pleasant place of residence for a time; the worst part of the entertainment is the bill. I fear, though, we must be content with but moderate accommodation at Warwick, now that it is full of bulky agriculturists and their cattle.'

'Are you going for Warwick?—my vare route; we will be friends to that town. Noble

castle there—superb relics of antique—a grand show, too, of bulls and cows and horses.’

‘Have you been staying at Oxford during the Commemoration?’ inquired Monkhouse of the German.

‘Ya-as — noble place, Oxford — wonderful buildings—went through several Colleges and was much delighted—heard poems recited in Public Hall, saw degrees conferred, and got crushed in de crowd. But why are de young gentlemen so boisterous? What mean by shouting out “De lady in pink bonnet”—“De lady in blue dress”? Has it anything to do with de ceremo-ny?’

‘Oh, no; it is only the exuberance of our Oxford gallantry; it is only, you observe, a cheer for the ladies.’

‘I do not observe, indeed, how such silliness is gallantry.’

‘You must remember that the men are dispersing for the long vacation, and brimful of animal spirits, which, you know, must find a safety-valve somewhere.’

‘Vare good—better blow off than burst; but I do not fancy what reason there is for de steam at all.’

‘Beauty and grace give heat to the boiler.’

‘All well—all right—excitable young men—gallant screamers—full of love and devotion—hope their throats have not suffered.’

‘Let them take their chance for that.’

‘But tell me something about de Professor who made Latin speeches on admitting de gentlemen to their degrees. Did he mean to say something pleasant and jocular now and then in his addresses?’

‘How do you mean?’

‘That man in de blue and red costume—he addressed him as *vir spectatissimus*; and that General with de prominent stomach—he said he was *belly-cosus*, and he had a smile on his face.’

‘The public orator certainly likes a little fun sometimes. Did you see the boat-races?’

‘Boat-races!’ the German replied sharply, as if a cloud was passing over his memory, ‘boat-races! Tamn de boat-races.’

‘Why,’ said Shorland, ‘they are surely a very animating sight.’

‘Ya-as, ya-as,’ replied the German, doggedly, ‘a vare fine sight—active youths—dashing contest—but—but—no more boat-races.’

‘Why, sir, have you such an unpleasant recollection of them?’

‘Why? why? say you?’ said the stranger, sharply; and then softening down into a deep solemn tone, he added, ‘Well, then, I tell you—they be my death and drowning almost.’

‘How did it happen, pray?’

‘How happen, pray?—well, attend. Boats all ranged in order—crews ready to start—pistol ready to fire—crowd ready to run—myself in middle of crowd. Well—bang fired pistol—away went boats, dash, splash, rush—away ran crowd alongside, shouting and hurrahing and encouraging—pushed me, who am not quick runner, forward and forward, till lost my breath—and then pushed me into river, when drowned, if man had not hooked me out by trousers.’

‘He deserved the name of “the judicious Hooker,”’ said Dolman.

‘It may be—de man was kind—I gave him half-a-crown—I wish him well—but for the boat-races, no more of them.’

Hereupon a little, fidgety, sharp-faced old woman, who had been for some time anxiously scanning the clouds, began to lament bitterly that drops of rain were beginning to fall.

‘I’m going for a day’s pleasure to Warwick,’ she said; ‘and what a pity it is! it is beginning to rain. O dear me! I’m so sorry!’

‘Public good, ma’am—public good—country wants rain—country wants rain—dried up hereabouts,’ said a gentleman with a Muggletonian aspect who sat opposite to her. It came out afterwards that he was the occupier of a cabbage garden and a small potato-ground, which

wanted moisture. 'Private convenience, ma'am, must give way to general benefit—providential arrangement, ma'am, to which we must submit.'

'I don't see that at all, I'm sure,' responded the little lady, sharply, who evidently did not believe in the public good; 'why should my bonnet suffer for the general benefit, I wonder? The general benefit, I expect, is much better able to bear the loss than I am.'

'Perhaps, ma'am,' said Dolman, striking in with the benevolent purpose of reconciling differences,—'perhaps you may have no objection to the common good coming to-morrow, if you may have fine weather to-day. You may compromise the difficulty in that way.'

'Well, no; I can't say I should,' replied the little lady, regarding Dolman partly as her friend; 'I should have no objection to the public good coming to-morrow; but what has the public good done for me that I should lose a day's pleasure by it?'

'You reason as logically,' said Dolman, 'as the man who, when he was urged to do something for posterity, asked indignantly what posterity had ever done for him that he should do anything for it?'

'I don't know as much about logic as you Oxford scholars,' said the sharp little woman,

in whose eyes Dolman was losing favour; 'but may-be I know as much about common sense.'

'We do all seek our own good,' said the German, who in his turn had to become mediator; 'human nature the world over—a cosmopolitan feeling.'

'A what feeling?' inquired the lady, who was evidently getting snappish and quarrelsome, and ready to have an encounter with anyone.

'A universal feeling, madam—one common to us all,' explained Dolman, who seemed wishful to retain her good opinion.

'As it has been said in Yarndale,' interposed Shorland, 'it's all for ourselves in this world.'

'Well, never mind,' said Dolman, 'you have had the forethought to bring your umbrella with you, and a good serviceable one it is.'

'It should be—it cost eight shillings,' responded the lady, more mildly. It was an instrument with a baggy look, of wide circumference, of good Manchester cotton, not ornamental, but useful.

'You are right, ma'am,' Dolman chattered on, 'in getting a good, sound, serviceable one. I don't know how it is, but I have a capital umbrella, rather bloated in its aspect, certainly, but very useful, and it never leaves me—it sticks to me like a brother; while the new silk

guinea umbrellas I get always desert me in a month. At a public meeting not long ago, I went to the man who kept the umbrellas, on leaving, and asked for mine, when he fumbled among them, and inquired, "Is yours a silk one?" "Yes," I answered, "a new silk one." "O, I am sorry to say," the man answered, "all the silk ones have gone half-an-hour ago."

'Aye, but that,' said the German, 'was de fraud—de sharper's trick.'

'No doubt it looked like it—it was sharp practice; but my genteel, slim umbrella evanesced,' replied Dolman, 'while my dropsical one of stout texture remains with me like a bosom friend. To be useful is better than to be handsome and ornamental, both in umbrellas, and ladies, and gentlemen, is it not, ma'am?—it lasts longer.'

'Well, you speak about true,' said the little lady, who seemed to take Dolman into her favour again. As for the man with the Muggletonian countenance, she did not forgive him at all; she never ceased to cast sharp, spiteful, forked-lightning glances at the corner where he sat, every now and then, till he left the carriage. On this taking place, his vacated seat was immediately occupied by a diminutive, snub-nosed, snuffing fellow, who began to talk

the moment he joined the party. He had been imposed upon ; it was not that he cared for the money, but he hated to be imposed on. Mr. Tibbs, the railway clerk, had refused to allow him a return-ticket from Warwick, and so he would be liable to an overcharge of half-a-crown. The complainant did not expect this treatment from Mr. Tibbs, as Mr. Tibbs was a particular friend of his ; Mr. Tibbs had once taken tea in a familiar way with himself and his wife. This was the burden of his wail ; and it would be impossible to conceive any tale better pulled in pieces than his. First, he began in the middle, and gave it several awkward rents in that part ; then he proceeded to the end, and worked it there awhile ; after that he shattered it fearfully in the beginning ; and at length for the last quarter-of-an-hour he commenced with his entrance into the booking-office, and was making his way over the whole of it at a hand-canter, plentifully interlarding it with ‘ I said says I’s,’ and ‘ he said says he’s,’ until he was compelled to cease by the train stopping at Warwick. How long the narrative would have lasted no one can tell ; but on the same principle that a circle represents eternity, or, as mathematicians prove that ‘ a to the power of nothing equals infinity ’ ($a^0 = \alpha$), his tale would probably have been

as destitute of end as it was of beginning and middle.

‘Good day, gentlemen,’ said the man to his fellow-travellers, somewhat graciously, for they had listened to him very patiently, and never interrupted the stream of his monologue—‘Good morning; I wish you a pleasant day at Warwick;’ and no sooner had he left them than he seized an old acquaintance by the button-hole, and began to enlarge afresh upon his grievance.

‘Our fellow-traveller,’ said Monkhouse, ‘has a story by the end as long and winding as Ariadne’s thread.’

‘Vare well, by gar,’ responded the German; and then he added in a sly, ludicrous manner—‘One bad-used man by friend Tibsh!’

‘I wonder what he thinks about the general good,’ asked the little woman, exultingly, as she was gathering up her packages; ‘most people talk about it grandly, while they like their own good a vast deal better—that’s what I think.’

‘It is de point of view,’ said the German, who regarded the lady with a favourable eye—‘de point of view, madam, from which we look at de object—that is de main thing.’

CHAPTER VIII.

REPOSE UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

OUR three friends and the German, on their arrival at Warwick, managed with great difficulty to get accommodation at an hotel for the night; they were admitted as a favour, and made to understand that their sleeping apartments would not be of the most magnificent order. The German had a small room allotted to himself; the other three were 'cabined, cribbed, confined' in an apartment next to his, which was just large enough to contain three very diminutive beds. Young men, however, fresh from College bed-rooms are not particular about airy chambers and four-posters, and so they were quite contented with their lot. The German also made the best of his situation. 'This hotel,' he said, 'not so superb as my last at Oxford—not the beautiful pillars—fine paintings—grand furniture; but it is vare comfortable—and my bedroom is pretty well—rather leetle, but it will do.'

It does not fall within the scope of this

chapter to enlarge upon the many wonderful objects that were then in the course of exhibition at Warwick. Agricultural implements, such as steam-ploughs, chaff-cutters, tile-moulders, machines for draining, reaping, thrashing, and such-like clever nick-nacks, left an impression on the mind of the spectator that the farmer was awaking to the importance of science and skill in carrying on his yearly round of labour; while the animals, combining such enormous size with such elegant proportions, showed to what perfection the breeding of cattle was carried by the gentry and yeomen of England. The German was in ecstasies at the sight of the various breeds of bulls, cows, sheep, and horses; but the full burst of his enthusiasm was reserved for the pigs. 'De peek,' he half soliloquized, 'is a happy leetle animal; he sleeps much and meditates much—I love de peek—he is a leetle sensual, but he has deep reverie. What a funny grunt and merry twinkle of his leetle eye has de peek!'

Monkhouse met Sir Richard according to appointment, and received his affectionate congratulation. Dolman and Shorland also were introduced to him. The baronet, however, was so busy with the affairs of the show, that he could not pay them the attention and civility

he would otherwise have done; so he gave them, at once, in his hearty, high-toned, gentlemanlike fashion, an invitation to his seat; and he promised them a hearty welcome from 'all there as the friends of his son.

'You see,' said he, 'Charles was always a favourite among us, and his friends are sure to be the friends of the house. I hope you have all left Oxford with distinction.

'Why, yes,' said Dolman, 'after a fashion; but we have not all of us the same classical developments as your son, Sir Richard.'

'Well, well, never mind,' said the baronet; 'you are distinguished perhaps in some other line; we should never get on together in the world if we all jostled each other in the same walk. Probably you could beat him across a country if I mounted you well?'

Dolman did not hesitate to say that he would willingly venture on the attempt.

'Now, I suppose,' continued Sir Richard, 'you are intending to take a little relaxation after your reading, and are as wild as school-boys let loose for a holiday.'

'The metaphor might be enlarged, perhaps,' said Dolman, 'as appropriate to an Agricultural show—

Like youthful steers unyoked, they take their courses,
East, west, north, south; or, like a school broke up,
Each hurries towards his home and sporting-place.

‘Well, yes,’ said the baronet, ‘that is not so bad. I knew more of Shakspeare, sir, when I had just graduated like you than I do now; everything is practical and utilitarian in these days; poetry is at a discount. We rarely hear of Shakspeare in the House, and never at Quarter Sessions. I doubt, too, whether he would come in very fitly in a speech after this evening’s dinner. Probably some of you might give me an appropriate quotation from the “Georgics”—Ha! ha!’

‘I fear,’ said Dolman, who here, as everywhere, was quite at his ease—‘I fear that Virgilian husbandry would be somewhat out of date in these days of steam-ploughs and patent thrashing-machines.’

‘Well, good morning! good morning!’ said the kind-hearted baronet; and he shook hands heartily with them all round, as though he wished to see them at more leisure.

A short time ago we indulged in a slight flourish to the praise of inns; we expressed ourselves generally of course, and the very notion of a general rule implies, according to school-boy associations, cases of exception. Our friends could scarcely congratulate themselves on their night’s accommodation; not that they had any just ground of complaint, for they had, in sporting phrase, accepted it with its engage-

ments. A variety of circumstances almost of necessity combined in a murderous conspiracy against their sleep. Through the night there was along the lobbies a tramping of heavy feet that seemed to support with a kind of tottering uncertainty the bodies to which they were attached; the inn-yard, which was just beneath their window, was never at rest; ostlers shouting, tipsy men brawling, vehicles leaving. And soon after day-dawn matters grew worse; bells began to ring; various specimens of the boot-tribe commenced rushing frantically along the passages; chambermaids now made their appearance; carriages in greater numbers rattled into and out of the inn-yard; the distant lowing of cattle struck upon the ear—

furit mugitibus æther
Concussus;¹

the town, beasts and men, seemed to be awaking before its time, and consequently in a bad temper; and so good-bye to sleep for that night.

To lie in the border-land between sleeping and waking; to luxuriate in a semi-oblivion of the world's doings, and to enjoy the faint visions of dream-land undisturbed—this may give rise to a species of slothful, pleasurable sensation, when the mind thinks and the heart feels without the trouble of an effort; but it is not

¹ Georgics, iii. 150.

so agreeable to be awoke every five minutes out of a sound and healthy sleep by a thumping which startles you with the impression that the house is tumbling about your ears. However agreeable is philosophy in the abstract, a person has no notion in the world of being made the *boná fide* subject for illustrating Lord Brougham's theory of dreams.¹ Have you ever on a stormy night slept in a room with shaky windows? You have just strength of mind enough to wish the windows at Jericho; but, after all, you have not strength of resolution enough to rouse yourself, get up, and fasten them; and thus you are deprived of the pleasures of sleeping, of waking, and also of existence in its neutral state.

'Holloa!' cried Dolman, between six and seven o'clock; 'are you awake, my darlings? as our old nurse used to say.'

'Awake!' answered Shorland; 'and who the deuce do you think but a fat German could sleep through such a noise as this? Do you not hear him, on the other side of this thin partition, blowing like a bag-pipe and snorting like a grampus?'

'Aye, he is blowing away care through his nostrils with a vengeance. He is as happy as de lettle peek he admired so much. But look,'

¹ *Discourse of Natural Theology*, part i. sec. v.

continued Dolman, 'I have been watching for the last hour the twitching of those bell-wires. Do you perceive that some dozen of them run through the corner of this room?'

'I see—but wherein lies the great discovery?'

'Oh, no great discovery perhaps; but, as some one has been so obliging as to pass a dozen bell-wires through this room, there can be no harm in trying a few conclusions with them. You know I was always a bit of an experimental philosopher in a small way.'

Hereupon he got out of bed, took a piece of string from his portmanteau, tied every bell-wire together as tightly as possible, and crept into bed again.

'There!' he went on, 'let us wait and see what comes of that contrivance.'

Matters remained as they were for some time; the German's nose continued to be vocal, and the three friends were sinking into somnolence under its drowsy lullaby, when an impatient twitch was given to one of the bell-cords. The signal, indeed, came from one, but it was answered by legion. Jingle! jingle! jingle! went six or eight bells, and hamper scamper ran man-servants and maid-servants to the respective apartments.

'Did you ring?' said a female voice to the German; 'do you want your shaving-water, sir?'

‘Yes—no,’ grunted the stout gentleman, his dawning faculties considerably mystified by the unusual clatter—‘no—yes—what do you mean? let me consider’—here he rubbed his eyes, summoned up his dormant energies, and delivered a peremptory and commanding ‘no.’

‘Beg pardon, sir, but I fancied as you was the gentleman going off by the half-past seven train.’

‘The debil take the half-past seven train,’ was the German’s laconic malediction; and he turned over and commenced a re-composure of his mental and physical powers.

The noise subsided; it was only like a momentary ruffle on the waters; the stream of time again flowed on peacefully, and the disturbed spot could not be discovered. It was not destined, however, that quiet should continue long. The scene was repeated with but little variation, as another anxious agriculturist desired the attendance of the boots or chambermaid.

‘What does our friend think of the English inn now?’ whispered Dolman.

It was easy enough to form an accurate opinion on the state of the German’s feelings; for, not to mention the reason of the thing, there were audible proofs of his discontent. Inasmuch, however, as half his faculties were

yet steeped in forgetfulness, and the other half much obnubilated by the mysterious visitations, he endured the same infliction three times without giving vent to any excessive outpouring of wrath. His lonely lucubrations savoured more of the melancholy than of the vengeful; there seemed something of happiness even mixed up in his feelings. He kept indulging that pleasant train of sentiment which belongs peculiarly to a man who is injured without a cause. He fancied himself a persecuted being, but a conscious innocence raised him above the malevolence of foes. He could now have sympathised with his fellow-traveller, in condemnation of Mr. Tibbs. A French philosopher with a long name laid down a theory, now commonly admitted, that a man derives some pleasure from the misfortunes even of his best friends; as a corresponding problem, it may be propounded, is there a person ever injured without provocation or cause, no matter how seriously, who does not derive some pleasure from the infliction?

‘The charm works well,’ said Dolman, in an under-tone, after the third general rattle; ‘our friend can bear another shock, I think.’

By this time, however, he was much more awake than before, and certainly much more wrathful. His solemn melancholy had given

way to unmixed anger; and what pleasure he then felt seemed to be chiefly derived from the hope of revenge. He tumbled about in his bed like a frigate in distress; and at every roll he grunted vengeance, the bed uttering a responsive groan. 'Ah! sacré!' he muttered between his teeth in indignant soliloquy, 'by de blood of my fadder and modder, I will have life. Come again, and I do great murder on man or on woman or on childsh—I will not spare.'

'Twitch! twitch!—jingle! jingle! jingle! The German leapt up in bed at the familiar sounds. He held his breath and listened. The servants were soon heard advancing, and the same light footstep paused at his door. Then came the gentle tap, accompanied by the usual question, but spoken in tones more conciliatory, 'Please, sir, did you want anything, sir?' The German made no reply; but, with the spring of a tiger which made his bed and the wooden partition totter, he darted to the door. The next moment there issued from the passage screams and imprecations heterogeneously blended. 'Murder! murder!' shrieked the damsel. 'Yes, you jade, I will murder!' responded the German. 'Help! help! missis!' cried Susan, in a shrill treble. 'Sacré! I will revenge!' croaked the other, in a hoarse, guttural tone.

The house, which before had been much excited by the ringing, was now thoroughly roused. The mistress, with two of her servants, came bustling upstairs. Dolman took the string from the bell-wires; and the three friends, after slipping on some clothing, proceeded to reconnoitre the scene of action.

The landlady, as landladies not unfrequently are, proved to be a fat, low-set personage, very protuberant in front. Her face, from the combined influence of rage and hot weather, was as red as a peony: in size and shape it might be aptly compared to Satan's shield, as described by Milton—

Whose broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdano, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.

Her head was enveloped in a dirty morning or night cap, and the beauty of her tresses was concealed in those unsentimental things called curl-papers. She arrived at the top of the stairs-landing in time to see the arms of the German encircling the chambermaid's neck; but whether with a hostile or an amatory intent she did not stop to inquire. She moved up to the pair at a rapid pace, and there seemed to be some fear lest the projecting part of her

person might impinge upon the foreigner and take him by storm, *primo impetu*, as the ancient battering ram levelled stout fortresses. Luckily, however, she stopped about a yard from him: neither side spoke, though both were agitated powerfully—it was a moment of death-like stillness—‘that awful pause dividing life from death.’

‘Susan!’ the landlady gasped out, after she had scanned the German well, and thus gained a little breathing-time. ‘Susan! I command you—as you vally your place, as you vally your character—I charge you, Susan, tell me what the ’bominable fellow did at you.’

‘Why, ma’am,’ whimpered Susan, in a tone half-way between a cry and an articulate sound—‘why, ma’am—he did—he committed, ma’am—he committed—’sault and battery on me, ma’am.’

Susan’s voice ended in a sob, and, to hide her confusion, she covered her face with her checked apron.

‘There, sir!’ said the landlady, raising her arm towards the German with a gesture of triumphant revenge—‘there, sir—you outlandish foreigner! That’s what you’ve been ringing and disturbing the house for—you—you—fellow! I’ll have no such pranks going on here, that I won’t. I’ll have you up before

your betters, that I will. You'll find, sir, that it isn't so comfortable a matter in our country to commit 'sault and battery on an unmarried woman.'

Here the German seemed to be choking; he strove for utterance, but was unable to speak. At length he advanced one step towards the landlady, clenched his fist, raised it over his head in a tragical attitude, and shouted, with all the energy that wrath could provoke, 'Sault and pattery! Gott tamm your 'sault and your pattery, and you too, you old debil as you are—'sault and pattery, indeed!'

The last syllable in the last word attenuated to a shriek; and, on concluding his defiance, in the blindness of his rage, he stamped upon the floor, took off the red night-cap which adorned his head, and threw it to the ceiling, displaying a pate as bare as a barber's block. All this time he was free and unfettered in the exercise of his tragic powers; for, his night-gown excepted, he was

Eased the putting off

The troublesome disguises which we wear:

and truth bids me declare—though modesty whispers a caution—that his night-dress 'in longitude' was somewhat 'scanty.' When he stamped, the calves of his legs shook like a dish of jelly, and his pale garment fluttered like a

vestal's robe in the breeze. From the broad proportions of his toga nocturnal at the shoulders, he seemed to descend to nothing at the feet, for all the world like a humming-top.

The landlady, who came up in expectation of submission and entreaties, was astonished at his raging antics; and, as he stepped towards her and stretched forth his hand, which was like a leg of mutton protruding from a pillow-case, she cautiously retreated, fearing, doubtless, lest 'sault and battery might be committed on her.

By this time the whole suite of rooms was in motion. One agriculturist, who had been shaving, came out of his apartment with a razor in his hand and one-half of his chin still covered with lather; another stepped forth with his braces dangling behind him and one top-boot on; and a third peeped round his door, as unadorned as the German. 'Come away, Susan,' said the landlady—'come away;' and when she had got to a safe distance, added—'from the foreign vagabond.' She led her servants down stairs with as much chaste dignity as Lucretia could have done, and her defiant foe retreated to his room, growling like a mastiff which has been engaged in a fight and got rather the worst of it.

About eleven o'clock the three friends, on

returning to the inn from the show-yard, found the German on the point of getting into a cab with his luggage.

‘Remember the boots, please sir; boots not put down in the bill, sir,’ said the porter to him, as he was stowing in his portmanteau.

‘Yes, by Gott, I will remember,’ answered the German—‘I will remember you as long as I live—for a set of knaves—I will remember you and your mistress too—for an old baggage—and if de debil fly away with her, I shall not weep.’

‘And don’t you mean to give me nothing, sir?’

‘Yes—you rascals all—I do mean to give you nothing’—and so saying, he shook his three fellow-passengers by the hand, and wished them much happiness. ‘Gott bless you!’ were his last words to them—‘one unlucky night has changed my thought on de English inn.’

In this age of mental pirouettes, when to-day’s phase of thought seems to be an index of nothing but what it will not be to-morrow, it would be well if all changes of opinion were for considerations as reasonable as those which influenced the good-natured but sensitive German!

CHAPTER IX.

YOUNG OXFORD AT YARNDALE.

YARNDALE is a town or city of ancient foundation ; it was a Roman station of some importance under Agricola ; and its records go still further back, stretching into the gloomy shadows of Druidical mysteries and aboriginal British myths. The derivation of the name is said to be from an ancient British term, *Yar-en*, red rock. It has all along occupied a position of some mark in our national history, having borne its part in the civil wars that have distracted our kingdom, as well as in the more humanising pursuits of peace ; and not the least of late years has it been distinguished for its bold and aggressive political movements. It has, too, at every period maintained a certain eminence in trade : during the reigns of the Edwards and Henrys it was celebrated for its linens and woollens ; but, of course, it is only with the progress of our commerce and manufactures that it has risen to its present magnitude and importance. Who can rightly

estimate those inventive achievements of the last hundred years which have been the main-spring of our manufacturing supremacy and commercial expansiveness? It is scarcely more than a century since the long cavalcade of packhorses trudged wearily with their burdens, at the rate of two or three miles an hour, over the hill and along the valley where the railway train now thunders, dragging its enormous load at ten times the speed: it is no longer since the country housewife plied her distaff and crooned a ballad over her slow operation, where now a town has sprung up, and millions of spindles are whirling, and tens of thousands of shuttles are shooting from side to side, driven by the agency of machinery and steam. The manufacturing towns of Lancashire are not characterised by much beauty; nor is Yarnsdale an exception. Their very localities are such as to afford the greatest facilities for the operations of trade; and where coal, iron, and clay for brick are abundant, the picturesque is for the most part scarce. The smoke, too, from factory chimneys, even where the inventions for consuming it are generally employed, is yet sufficient to sully a white frock and besmear a freshly-washed face. Then, in such towns, there is street after street extending in all directions, narrow and dirty,

composed of very humble dwellings for factory operatives and workpeople generally. The clouds often hang heavily over such places, and as a general rule much rain falls there. The rivers and streams that flow through or near them are often black as ink from the chemical outpouring of the adjacent dye-works. Still, Yarnsdale is not without its attractions; it is the metropolis of trade, and as such has certain advantages of wealth and position. It contains streets of warehouses, some of which are in a style of decoration so elaborate that they would bear a comparison with the most ornate public buildings of our country. Its shops, though not outwardly showy, are distinguished by the richness and excellence of their goods. Its public buildings are of considerable architectural pretensions. Its statues of monarchs, statesmen, warriors, and men of science, have been procured without the consideration of expense. Its parks are laid out with taste, and are places of delightful recreation to many a poor mechanic and factory operative with their families. And though Yarnsdale does not bear the slightest comparison with London in grandeur, wealth, and all those attractions which administer to the gratification of a refined taste, yet it may be said to have an importance of its own, and as a local city to

exercise no slight influence on our national prosperity and greatness.

In most directions the neighbourhood of Yarndale is very beautiful; the surrounding country in many parts is well cultivated, and it is rendered more attractive by the elegant villas that are scattered on all sides. No person of property lives in Yarndale proper; every evening and Sunday it is deserted by all its citizens who have made money, are making money, or expect to make money. The shop-keeper retires to one of the nearest suburbs; the merchant or manufacturer pushes out still further into the country, and has his detached villa and private grounds; the sleeping partner takes a still longer flight, perhaps into a neighbouring county; and no sooner does the man of trade withdraw his capital from his old concern and wipe his hands of business, or leave a portion of his capital in the establishment to in-coming partners at six per cent., than he withdraws himself entirely from the sight and smell of calicoes and blankets, and assumes the position of a country gentleman.

Mr. Shorland resided some three or four miles from his place of business; to use the auctioneer's phrase, in a very elegant and commodious mansion, called 'The Oaks,' situated in its own shrubbery and pleasure-grounds.

Being yet immersed in business, he could not afford, neither did he desire, to live at a greater distance from his warehouse. Nothing was further from his purpose than a withdrawal from trade, which was, perhaps, more than ever his life and being. From what has been said of his character, it might be a matter of surprise that his residence should be an architectural structure of some pretensions, and his establishment on a scale of some magnificence. There is, however, nothing inconsistent in this. A merchant who has ascended high on the steep hill of commerce has a social position to maintain, and the necessity of doing so he introduces as an item into his business calculations. Mr. Shorland lived probably at the rate of two thousand a year; but his position as a first-rate merchant demanded this at least, and his social station thus gave him a sort of leverage for fresh transactions of profit.

Mr. Shorland's family consisted of his wife, a daughter, and two sons, with one of whom the reader has already made acquaintance. The old gentleman had acted with more prudence than so many bold youths, who marry on the prospect of success in business; he had waited for that domestic consummation till he was upwards of forty, and fairly established in a large and wealthy mercantile house, so that

family expenses might not interfere with his further commercial progress. Mrs. Shorland was a lady of fair manners, though a fastidious person would have perceived that her early life had not been spent in the most refined society, so far as exterior accomplishments are assumed to constitute refinement; but, what was better in her position, she had strong natural sense and an intuitive delicacy of feeling. The name of the eldest-born of the family was Jacob, and in most things he was a real chip of the old block; he bore a striking resemblance to his father in features and form, and even a stranger would have had no difficulty in settling his paternity; he was with his father in business, and he inherited all the old gentleman's love of money and aptitude to accumulate it; he was as dear to his parent's heart as flesh and blood could be, but whether he was as dear to the heart of society at large may be a question. He resided with the family at 'The Oaks.' Alice Shorland, who was a year or two younger than Frederick, had of course received the best education that could be given; nor had expense been spared in imparting to her all those feminine accomplishments which are supposed to be necessary for bearing a part in good society. How far she could be called handsome would be a matter of taste; her

hair was jet-black; her features were well formed, but somewhat dark and pale; they were apparently impassive and statuesque in their fixed state, but when animated she manifested a vivid expression of feeling; her dark eyes were lit up with unusual brilliancy, and her countenance was the index of a strong emotion. She was one of those who might be called cold or impassioned, according to the phase in which she was observed. Her figure was tall and stately, and well developed, and her mien easy and graceful. On the whole, if she could not be regarded as eminently beautiful, she was one whose appearance and demeanour would not pass away from the memory on the instant. Frederick was the favourite with the ladies of the family, and Jacob was the father's ideal of a son.

A week or ten days had now elapsed since Graham's return from Oxford, and Mr. Shorland's indignation at his son's misconduct had in some degree subsided. Mrs. Shorland had made light of Frederick's delinquency, and endeavoured to pacify her husband; but Jacob had expressed his great dissatisfaction that three or four hundred pounds should be drawn out of the business, where it was making twenty per cent., to pay the College debts of a thoughtless fellow; nay, he had urged his father to

place this sum as a permanent debt against his younger brother. Mr. Shorland, senior, however, had now partly forgotten the misdeed, if he had not entirely forgiven his erring son; and he was therefore prepared to meet him with something like dignified toleration, and at the same time to receive with cordiality and good humour Monkhouse and Dolman, who had agreed to spend a few days at 'The Oaks' on their way to the English lakes.

'Have you never been so far north as this before?' inquired Mr. Shorland, as the family were at breakfast with their guests on the morning after their arrival.

'No, sir,' said Monkhouse; 'a manufacturing town is quite new to me.'

'Then,' rejoined the merchant, oracularly, 'you have a great deal to see, sir; you will find what is far more interesting, so far as I think, in a factory or a warehouse than in your Oxford monasteries or on the mountain-sides of Westmoreland.'

'Yes, but, sir,' Dolman struck in, after his self-reliant manner, 'we want some out-door recreation after our severe work; we stand in need of the fresh mountain breezes to invigorate our frames; we require some relaxation for the mind, which has been so long like a bow too tightly strung.'

‘Humph!’ grunted Mr. Shorland, in an undertone; ‘I don’t think you will kill yourself with overwork for all that. You south-country people mostly die in your beds. Dolman! Dolman! The name has not a north-country sound about it. We have a firm of Dolliman and Sowerbutts, but I never heard of any Dolman.’

‘Well, sir,’ replied the owner of that name, ‘it is somewhat strange, and of uncertain derivation. These rooters into the extraction of names have been in some doubt about it. It is not found on the records of the Heralds’ College, but it is admitted to be very ancient. Some say it was attached to our family either from having left some dole to the poor, or from having been a recipient of some dole from a rich man’s legacy; some say we got the name from being of a very doleful and melancholy temperament; others lay it down, and with these I mainly agree, that the name is really Dullman, and so called because we were a dull and stupid race, who grew up somehow like cabbages, and, like them, were cut down in due season.’

‘Did you go out in honours, Mr. Dolman?’ inquired Mrs. Shorland, who perhaps was wishful to avert some unpleasant remark from her partner.

‘Well, ma’am, not exactly; I was not in the class-list, though what I did was well done. Somehow, with all my application, I never could make a finished scholar of myself; it does not seem to be my vocation. My father is a rector in Kent, a D.D., and remarkable as being a famous scholar of the Parr and Porson school; but he gave me up early as a bad bargain, and sent me to Rugby to have scholarship whipped into me.’

‘The masters, I hope, succeeded in that,’ said Miss Shorland, slyly.

‘They succeeded well enough,’ rejoined Dolman, ‘in the whipping department, but I fear their success was not so manifest in the amount of knowledge they instilled. Monkhouse there is the great scholar of the party; he has imbibed enough learning for us all. He is a model collegian. He has gained first classes, University prizes, and an open Fellowship at Oriel. If this be not enough to satisfy one man, he must be a glutton.’

‘We congratulate you, I am sure, Mr. Monkhouse, on your great success,’ said Miss Shorland, who, from the sincere manner in which she spoke, seemed to have as much respect for scholastic attainments as for the trade of Yarndale.

‘It was more owing to the defects of my

opponents than to any merits of my own,' said Monkhouse, laughing.

'How did Frederick go on with his reading?' inquired Mrs. Shorland. 'He was considered a clever youth at Caswall College, but his health was always too delicate to allow him to study very much.'

The truth is, Caswall College is one of those modern institutions which promise so much, and may be useful, perhaps, in promoting a certain species of education, but which, as a preparation for Oxford, are most unfitting. Indeed, had not Frederick Shorland been endowed with an intellect above the average, Caswall College would probably have stranded him high and dry in his Oxford examinations.

'Yes,' Dolman replied, in a tone between the serious and the comic, 'he was always a delicate young gentleman; his mind was too ardent for his body; it wore him out, consuming him like a slow fire.'

'But if not a hard reader,' rejoined Mrs. Shorland, 'he has passed through his Oxford career quietly and profitably, I hope; he has, like yourself, kept out of all scrapes.'

'Yes, he was a general favourite both with the Dons and Undergraduates; the worst scrape he ever got into that I know of was from his kissing the Proctor.'

‘Kissing the what?—kissing the what?’ inquired Mr. Shorland, very hastily.

‘The Proctor, sir.’

‘And who or what the deuce is the Proctor, that my son should think of kissing her?’

‘The Proctor, sir, is the chief magistrate in the University.’

‘Oh, indeed,’ said Mr. Shorland, somewhat relieved; ‘I thought it might have been the name of some laundress, or cook, or nursemaid. But what do you mean by Frederick kissing the chief magistrate?’

‘Well, sir, it happened in this way, as I am informed. The Proctor wears a velvet gown, like a lady—’

‘Silk velvet, I suppose?’ interposed Jacob Shorland for the first time; ‘is it figured or plain?’

‘To tell the truth,’ rejoined Dolman, ‘I never looked particularly; indeed, I never desired a very near inspection of his robes of office. I loved the man as a rule, and respected the office, but I loved and respected them at a distance—at arm’s length. I generally gave the autocrat plenty of walking room when I met him. Well, this particular Proctor was a little fat gentleman, very short of wind; and Shorland there, turning hastily round a corner, came full against him, caught him in his arms

as he was falling, and then gave him a salute, thinking from his velvet gown that he was a lady. That was the current report: it might not be true, though.'

'Did you ever hear of this, Mr. Monkhouse?' inquired Miss Shorland.

'Why,' replied he, 'I always understood that Shorland was on very affectionate terms with the authorities.'

'Whoever heard such nonsense?' exclaimed Frederick Shorland, who had been all along very uneasy, endeavouring to laugh with one side of his face, and looking daggers at Dolman with the other. 'It is true I nearly knocked the little gentleman down, and to save his falling I caught him in my arms; that is all.'

'Well,' said Mr. Shorland, with a sort of arid chuckle, 'if he were like our chief magistrate, he lost nothing by missing the salute.'

'You, Mr. Dolman, have probably kept yourself quite clear of all such mistakes?' inquired Mrs. Shorland, with a merry twinkle of the eye.

'Well, ma'am, I can hardly say that. It is true I have always sought to walk in the path of prudence and caution, but I fear I was born under an unlucky star. If I am compelled to answer your question, I am bound in honour to say that I have occasionally done things *malapropos*, but quite unintentionally, which

have brought me into trouble. I must add, however, that good luck came hand-in-hand with the bad, and I have always emerged from disaster unscathed. It has always seemed to me that two conflicting influences were in the ascendant when I was born. I never examined what was the conjunction of planets at the hour of my birth, but I feel sure there were two unseen powers then in contest for the control of my destiny.'

'Your nativity,' suggested Monkhouse, 'was perhaps as marvellous as Glendower's:—

At my nativity,
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets; and, at my birth,
The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shaked like a coward.

'These marvellous things may have happened when I was born, but I never heard of it.'

'I suppose,' continued Monkhouse, 'you would call the act *malapropos*, when you stuck that poor Jones's leg into the fire, and burnt it off?'

'Well, why not? The troublesome fellow deserved it, and didn't I pay the doctor's bill?'

The Shorlands looked startled: Jacob began to mutter something about its being time to leave for the city.

'You shall be judge, Mrs. Shorland,' con-

tinued Dolman, unmoved. 'I was reading for my Responsions, and no one can be expected to be amiable then. Well, the man who occupied the room above me one night had a supper-party, at which the guests, so far as noise was concerned, scarcely kept within the bounds of decorum. You can understand how this would act on the nerves of a delicate person like myself, who had no superfluous scholarship for the coming examination, and had to work till midnight. But the worst of it was, there was a man there called Jones, who had a wooden leg, and the battering of this stump by way of applause almost crazed me. I knew the man by sight, and had on former occasions been introduced to his stump through the ceiling, but I was not personally acquainted with him. Now after the party broke up, I heard this Jones coming, thump, thump, down stairs; I was glad to think that I should be rid of the troublesome leg, when, lo! he came straight into my room, mistaking it for that of some friend of his who lived on the other side of the staircase. That's right, thought I—now I have you; I will have my revenge on your detestable member. So, without saying a word, I caught him round the waist with one arm, whipped up his wooden leg with the other, and before he knew where he was I stuck it between the bars

of my fire-grate, which contained heat enough to have roasted a hecatomb. What the man's sensations were at that time it would be impossible to say. At first he seemed petrified, and watched his stump for a few seconds as it sent forth the "bearded flame" without uttering even an ejaculation. By degrees, however, he began to feel that he was no petrification, and, like a man who wakes from the stupor of intoxication, and finds himself in the stocks, he commenced shouting might and main, "Murder, murder! holloa! you rascal—help! help! you villain—oh! oh! I'm burning to death!" All this time I held him fast, and the flame of the ligneous appendage went roaring up the chimney in indignation. "There!" I said, letting him go free after half the leg had become dust and ashes, "there! that unlucky stump—that *triste lignum*—will annoy me no more at any rate." Now, friend Jones had no sooner become disengaged than he made a most infuriated rush at me; but miscalculating in his anger the length of his leg, he fell forward on his hands and knees, upsetting my table and smashing my teacups and saucers. It was a scene of no slight confusion. Impolite expressions, I fear, were mingled with the crash of falling crockery; the injured man lay supine amidst broken glass, smashed china, lumps of

sugar, pats of butter, half-eaten loaves, and scattered books, with his sooty timber pointing to the ceiling, while sparks were flying from the still smouldering member, as if a batch of fireworks was fizzing in the room, to the injury of my carpet and furniture. At length he managed to rise, when he hopped to the door, and with some difficulty made his escape into the Quadrangle. His first effort there was to catch at a pillar, and to this he clung; but in his attempts to put down his abbreviated member he received an impulse forward each time, and so he kept up a circular motion—what Milton calls a ‘roll orbicular’—round the column till he became dizzy, and fell flat on his back. Then he began to holloa lustily for help, and the porter, hearing cries of distress, came up and assisted him to his room. Now, did I not serve the man right, think you, Mrs. Shorland?’

Miss Shorland laughed outright at Dolman’s narrative; Jacob seemed scarcely to extract anything from it to laugh at, but wondered how much the damage would be; Mr. Shorland looked perplexed and bewildered, as much as to say, ‘Well, you are a cool customer, at any rate!’

‘Did I not serve the man right,’ asked Dolman again?

‘On the Lynch-law principle, perhaps,’ said Mrs. Shorland, laughing; ‘but did you not hear of the matter again?’

‘Why, yes—I was summoned before the authorities on the next day, admonished paternally by the Head, and ordered to make good the damage from the combustion of Jones’s leg. And here I was subjected to a great injustice; I pleaded my broken crockery, fractured table, and burnt carpet, as a set-off; I argued upon the trifling value of the consumed member; and, after all, they made me pay thirty shillings for the destruction of the antiquated stump.’

‘In Yarndale, sir, that would be called stumping up,’ observed Mr. Shorland, his sardonic features relaxing slightly at his pun.

‘You cheer me, sir, with a very *apropos* pun after my *malapropos* affair,’ replied Dolman; ‘but puns are suspicious forms of speech: there is said to be a certain connection between puns and pocket-handkerchiefs.’

‘Pocket-handkerchiefs? How so?’ asked Mr. Shorland; he had the day before shipped off a cargo of such-like materials to South Africa, and he thought, perhaps, that allusion was made to his merchandise.

‘Oh nothing, sir,’ rejoined Dolman; ‘only there is a prevalent notion in Oxford, that if a

gentleman or lady is vicious enough to make a pun—excuse me, sir—-he or she is vicious enough to pick a pocket. I believe the idea originated with a surly old rogue called Samuel Johnson.’

CHAPTER X.

CAREFUL AGE AND CARELESS YOUTH.

‘I AM afraid, Mr. Dolman,’ said Mr. Shorland, meditatively, as if the ledger were before his eyes, as he continued at breakfast, ‘that you will have cost your father more than you ought during your career at College; I fancy that there would be other unsatisfactory items against you in the balance-sheet, besides the thirty shillings for the spoiled leg.’

‘Well, sir, as to a balance-sheet I never was very clear at figures; and whenever I tried my hand at one in my own case, I have generally found it went against me; I was at school particularly dull at arithmetic; ‘multiplication was my vexation, and fractions drove me mad.’ But as to draining the pockets of the good Rector, it so happens that I have cost him little or nothing since I went to College. I never gave him trouble on the score of money, though I once gave him a start on another matter.’

‘How was that, sir?’ asked father Shorland.

‘It is perhaps as well to hear how you youngsters are accustomed to treat your seniors. “Forewarned, forearmed!” Once bit, you know!’

‘It was in this way, then. When I had passed my examination for Responsions, which I did triumphantly after the martyrdom of the wooden member, I was advised to take a little relaxation, as we are now doing after our severe studies. So, in obedience to medical advice—ahem!—I agreed with a friend to go down to Ascot races on the Cup Day—a pretty long run from Oxford there and back—’

‘Not with Frederick, I hope,’ interrupted Mr. Shorland.

‘No, indeed! he was then reading very assiduously himself, for he had to go in for his Responsions a few days after; we were examined alphabetically, and he was the victim of the letter S. Well, sir, as we were walking at the outskirts of the crowd, I stopped my friend, and, pointing to an elderly gentleman at a distance, I said, “You would be surprised at the remarkable likeness between that man and my father.” The object of our remark was a person of dignified appearance, who was standing away from the crowd, seemingly unconscious of the countless spectacles of wonder and the exhibitions of “fast and furious”

mirth that were before him. We had no uncertainty in pronouncing him a clergyman. A doctor's hat shadowed a true rectorial physiognomy; small-clothes decorated with knee-buckles, black silk stockings, and thin shoes, were the outward integuments of the lower man. It was my father's very dress—his very position, too—with one hand behind his coat-skirts and the other in his waistcoat. "But are you sure," asked my friend, "that it is not your veritable father?" Why, nothing could have been more improbable. He was not, so far as I knew, in that neighbourhood at all; and if he had been, a race-course would have been the last place where he would have been seen. However, on our approaching the mysterious double, I found at once, to my infinite surprise, that it was my real father in the flesh; and, what was worse than all, it was clear that he had caught a sight of us.'

'Well,' said Mrs. Shorland, 'did you not go up to him, and express your pleasure at such an unexpected meeting?'

'Not in the least, ma'am; we made for the crowd, slowly and carefully, as if nothing were amiss; though I fancy I was much like the man who was going to be hung, and tried to put it off with a laugh. Twirling my stick with an affected *nonchalance*, I brought it to bear acci-

dentally on the nose of a lumpy showman, who threatened, as he said, to "punch my head." I heard distinctly the Rector calling my name, but I heeded him not. We soon reached the crowd, and looking round for the first time I saw a sight which gave me much pain. The Doctor was no longer in pursuit. He was standing on one leg and applying his hand to the other. His face, from its contortions, was expressive of anything but comfort; his broad-brimmed clerical beaver was lying on the ground in imminent peril either of being crushed into a square yard or transferred to the uncombed head of some hatless thimble-rigger. The cause of his disaster is one of no unfrequent occurrence on a race-ground. There is a game much practised in such places, called by the name of "civil-will-pegs," or, with slight variations, "Aunt Sally," in which intellectual sport even noble lords have been known publicly to join. Now, those lawless lads who pitch the sticks take a mighty pleasure in conveniently missing their aim and breaking the shins of some simple bystander, acting up to the professional cry for the encouragement of the players, "Hit my legs and miss my pegs." Thus, a dignitary of the Church had seemed fair game on a race-course for the shot of some

rough, untamed cub who was handling the sticks.'

'And did you not return,' inquired Mrs. Shorland, 'to render what assistance you could?'

'Well, ma'am, I was not quite a "pious Æneas" in the circumstances; we thought it better, on the whole, to get back to Oxford as soon as convenient.'

'Did you hear any more of the matter?'

'Yes, indeed; I received a letter in a day or two from the Rector, in which he desired to know whether he had seen me on the Ascot race-course on such a day, mentioning it specifically. He was staying with his friend Dr. Grantham in the neighbourhood, and had gone to survey the iniquity of such a scene, that he might on some occasion "improve it" to his own flock.'

'And you wrote back the truth, I hope,' said Mrs. Shorland.

'Well, yes, I did, in one sense; but I cannot say that my conscience fairly acquitted me in the business, for there was some equivocation mixed up in it after all.'

'Where was the equivocation?'

'Why, it so happened that the Rector, being from home, had mistaken the day of the week on which we met. He fixed on the previous

day—that on which I was in the Responion-schools for my examination—specifying it very particularly. I therefore enclosed him my *Testamur*, which carried the date on it, as evidence that he was under a mistake. Perhaps I did not act so improperly after all, seeing that it spared the kind old gentleman some anxiety.’

‘Was he quite satisfied with the explanation, sir?’ inquired Mr. Shorland. ‘I fear he puts too much trust in human nature—at any rate, filial nature. But in one thing he was wrong—he neglected his dates. Let me advise you, sir, always to be particular in your dates; in the event of a Bill becoming due, a day is everything.’

‘Why so?’ asked Dolman, not quite comprehending the nature of a Bill. ‘I have sometimes put my tailor off many a day.’

‘Tailors’ bills! Man alive, what are you thinking about? I don’t mean a bill of that kind,’ said Mr. Shorland, somewhat testily; ‘do you not know that most of our business transactions are carried on by means of Bills at so many months’ date—some of them for thousands and tens of thousands.’

‘I should be glad to accept a Bill of that magnitude,’ interposed Dolman, ‘if it was to go to my own credit.’

'So,' continued Mr. Shorland, 'considering your father's negligence, I am not sure whether you were not justified in concealing from him the facts of the case. In business, if a man were to misquote a date, I should set him down as a goose. Was your father satisfied, sir?'

'Yes; the *Testamur* was a fact not to be disputed. When in a lively humour, the benevolent old Rector sometimes yet describes the scene over a bottle of port. He always attributes the delusion either to the din in his head or the dust on his spectacles; he believes, too, that his wounded shin was a judgment on him for witnessing such a scene of iniquity. He never, however, gives up the point that the likeness was most remarkable.'

'You told us just now,' said Mr. Shorland, 'that you cost your father little or nothing at College. What are your notions of little or nothing? If I had met Frederick on the Ascot race-course, I should have fancied that money was going out of many holes at the bottom of the purse—as we say here, that the candle was burning at both ends.'

'It is quite true, sir, as I said. By good luck, I cost my father nothing at Oxford—nothing, except on one occasion, when he staid a week with me, and paid his own battel-account. The truth is, sir, I had an old aunt,

with whom I was a great favourite. I used to vex her sometimes by teasing her cats and mixing her Berlin worsteds; but I soon got into her good graces again. She was about the only one I have met with who could appreciate my good qualities as they deserve; she had a deep penetration into human nature, and appreciating my excellence, the amiable, Christian-minded, discriminating old lady left me a moderate income in the Three per Cents—Consols, are they not called? It is very little, it is true, judged by your notions of money at Yarndale; but it serves me pretty well, who am not so bad a financier after all.'

'That's right, sir; keep out of debt, let me advise you,' rejoined Mr. Shorland, perhaps giving a sly rap on the knuckles of his younger son; 'when I earned fifteen shillings a week, I lived on one-half of it.'

'Bless me!' exclaimed Dolman; 'how did you manage? I wish, sir, you would give me the receipt.'

'I might give you the receipt, young man; but the difficulty would be in living up to it or down to it.'

'Aye, so it would be, I fancy; I forgot that.'

'You see,' continued Mr. Shorland, 'many of the merchants and manufacturers in Lancashire have been, as it is called, the architects:

of their own fortunes ; and I am proud to say that I am one of them. We care very little about pedigrees here, I can tell you.'

It is sometimes a trial to children to hear their parents boasting of their low extraction ; and to no one was it more likely to be painful than to a young man fresh from Oxford, in company with friends of more aristocratic birth ; but Frederick Shorland, whatever he felt, was too manly to evince any emotion of shame ; and his sister, who had doubtless heard similar remarks from her father hundreds of times, seemed equally indifferent.

'Well, but, sir,' rejoined Dolman, somewhat provokingly—perhaps fancying that there might be as much pride in surveying heaps of wealth, the *nummos in arcâ*, as in the contemplation of ancestry—'some of your townsmen, I am quite sure, think a deal of pedigrees after they leave Yarndale. A family, who were said to come from these parts, took for a term a nobleman's mansion in my father's parish. They lived in great style with their carriages and servants, holding up their heads very high, I assure you ; and their everlasting boast was, that their ancestors came over with William the Conqueror.'

'What was the name?'

'Blatherwick, I think it was. Their crest was a fierce-looking knight in armour, wielding

a tremendous battle-axe. Mr. Blatherwick got the name among us of William the Conqueror, and the Misses Blatherwick, who by the way were desperately scraggy and ugly, were called the Norman heiresses. The Rector was glad to get quit of them; for, though Mr. Blatherwick was more liberal than the neighbouring gentry, he was troublesome and dissatisfied.'

'In what way?'

'He raised a stir about church-rates.'

'They are objectionable payments—odious imposts on property.'

'Then he would have a new-fangled hymn-book, compiled by the Rev. Ezekiel Grubbins. Now, the old Rector could do with Tate and Brady, or Sternhold and Hopkins, but he could not swallow Ezekiel Grubbins all at one bite; so Mr. Blatherwick went off in his carriage to a church three miles away, with his battle-axe quarterings, his red-plushed servants, and his scraggy daughters.'

'A man, sir,' said Mr. Shorland, 'has a right to act up to his opinions in all matters that come before him. As to his fondness for pedigree and display, he was a donkey; but he was a good man of business—Blatherwick and Meicklejohn—I have turned over thousands upon thousands with them—they were always true to their word and promise.'

‘Yes, sir, capital men of business in Yarn-dale, no doubt; but country gentlemen and town gentlemen have different ways of thinking—perhaps the men of business are the wiser of the two: it is, I suppose, all a matter of taste. At any rate, Mr. Blatherwick did not “cotton” with the squires, nor did the squires with him; so they saw very little of each other, except at highway, vestry, or poor-law meetings. And, at last—so it was thought—because Lord Long-acre would not visit with him, and Sir James Jolly turned up his nose at the Blatherwick heiresses, he left the neighbourhood altogether in a kind of dudgeon, and went to some park a long way off. Most people took the departure very patiently.’

‘Lord This! and Sir Something That!’ retorted Mr. Shorland, with some energy: ‘what nonsense to the mind of a reasonable being! Was not Blatherwick a far better man than those lounging blockheads who have nothing else to do but to go holloaing and galloping across a country, like fools, after howling dogs and stinking foxes, or to weary their clumsy legs in shooting such nasty vermin as rabbits?’

‘I suppose, Mr. Dolman,’ interrupted Mrs. Shorland—who was probably wishful to lead the conversation away from a dangerous topic—‘I suppose, like Frederick, you will be considering

about a profession. Have you yet come to a decision on the subject?’

‘Yes; I have almost fixed to go to the Bar. I have a brother who will take my father’s Living, which is a family one; and his face is admirably cut out for it; he will be the right man in the right place. The Rector always says that I am neither fit for trade nor the Church: “if,” says he, looking very grave, “you enter the ministry of the Church, you will sometimes forget the solemnity of your office; if you go into business, you will bring yourself to the Court of Bankruptcy; therefore,” he concludes, in his syllogistic way, “you must try the Bar: only,” he adds playfully, “take care that you keep within the Bar and out of the dock.”’

‘How do you think, Mr. Monkhouse?’ asked Mrs. Shorland; ‘do you imagine that he is adapted to this learned profession? Will he ever be Lord Chancellor?’

‘I can’t say, indeed,’ replied Monkhouse; ‘he knows something of human nature; he has a fair amount of general information; he has a ready gift of talking; he spoke very fairly in the “Union” Society at Oxford; and, what is best of all, he is not hampered with much diffidence. Give him time, and let him settle to his work, and he may succeed.’

‘Yes, there it is,’ rejoined Dolman; ‘in that

is my hope—a modest assurance lubricated by a little unctuous humbug will go further than all your Greek and Latin, Monkhouse—your philosophy, and such like nonsense. Depend upon it, humbug is the oil that greases the wheels of society, and makes them turn and work without creaking. I wonder, Mr. Jacob, whether it is a material ever used in a merchant's warehouse or on 'Change? whether it is an ingredient in the sale of calicoes and in bills of parcels?'

'Why, sir,' answered Jacob, seriously, 'it is right and just to lay out our money as advantageously as we can, and to give the best appearance to our articles of sale. You are not called upon to place the worst side of your velvet before your customer, or that side of the print on which the pattern does not show. You are bound, too, by every moral law to show civility to the buyer. You are perfectly justified in placing your goods before him in a coaxing sort of way; and it is his duty to find out their defects if they have any. This is common sense, sir, backed by Scripture: "Let all things be done decently and in order."'

A pleasant anecdote was about that time circulating in the warehouse of Shorland and Co., illustrative of what Jacob meant by doing all things 'decently and in order.' He was show-

ing through the establishment a gentleman who was engaged to purchase blankets and warm clothing for missionary purposes at the Red River Settlement. He had the goods unfolded before his customer in great quantities ; and, as he led him from room to room on a tour of inspection, kept up a running commentary after the following fashion: ‘An excellent cause, sir, is yours—look here, sir, a most substantial kind of cloth this, very cheap and very good—a praiseworthy object you have before you, sir, very scriptural and delightful—those blankets will be very serviceable in such cold parts—a laudable purpose, sir—those corduroys are first-rate—a very laudable purpose.’ Then turning to the salesman, he whispered in an “aside,” “Lay him on ten per cent., Sellars; he knows no more about goods than that yard-wand.”’

‘Suppose,’ Frederick Shorland broke in, who began to fear lest Dolman’s banter might be understood as though it were spoken in earnest—‘suppose you pick up a Yarndale heiress, and so render your forensic efforts unnecessary?’

This, however, was not a particularly successful dash for a subject; for Mr. Shorland and his eldest son looked sour, as though Dolman might suppose that some allusion was remotely made to Alice. Mrs. Shorland, however, who had a clearer insight into the nature of the

young friends, laughed at the idea of Dolman winning a Yarndale heiress.

‘Well,’ replied Dolman, ‘that would not be amiss, if all the other attractions were on a par with the money.’

‘What attractions? What are your expectations?’ asked Mrs. Shorland.

‘The lady must not be above twenty stone weight—she must not be above forty years of age—she must not beat her maids—she must not take more than three glasses of brandy-and-water at a sitting—she must not——

‘For shame, Mr. Dolman!’ said Mrs. Shorland; ‘I have in my eye the very lady that will suit you. This evening you shall sit next to an unmarried lady who has five thousand a year in her own right.’

‘So,’ added Fred. Shorland, ‘you must go in for the heiress, and make your game.’

‘Come, Jacob,’ said Mr. Shorland, ‘the omnibus is not far off. Good morning, gentlemen.’ So saying, he with his son went down to his gates to meet the vehicle, and to have a sixpenny ride to his warehouse. ‘Well,’ he mused with himself, as the omnibus rattled towards town, ‘I hardly know what to make of these two friends of Frederick. That Monkhouse is a quiet, gentlemanly man, it is true, and, they say, a great scholar; but he would

never make a man of business ; he wants energy, dash, boldness for a good salesman ; besides, I suspect he is a chicken-hearted fellow, who would be hampered with scruples at every turn. That Dolman, I guess, would not be troubled much in that way ; he would have plenty of life and energy for business ; he would be plausible in effecting sales ; he would not be amiss in the fancy department where he had to do chiefly with the women, and where gammon comes in so well. But, is it not a strange thing for an Oxford scholar ?—he has no notion whatever of accounts !—he had never heard of a Bill at three months' date !—he did not know for certain that the Funds were called Consols, though he has ever so long drawn his dividends from them quarterly ! What is to be done with Frederick, I don't know ; but of one thing I am pretty sure—that this Oxford life has spoiled him for being a good tradesman.' Then, remembering with thankfulness that he had a son by his side after his own heart, he stepped lightly out of the omnibus, and entered his warehouse.

CHAPTER XI.

A DINNER PARTY.

AT half-past six the family party at "The Oaks" were assembled in the drawing-room, awaiting the guests of the evening. On surveying the apartment no one would have supposed that the master of the household was plagued with any penuriousness of disposition; but, as it has been before observed, handsome rooms, expensive furniture, and an occasional dinner-party, are sometimes entered in the ledger as items of business. The drawing-room was spacious and well-proportioned; on one side looking over a closely-mown lawn interspersed with flower-beds, and on the other opening into a conservatory filled with the choicest plants and flowers. The furniture of the room was of a very costly character; the pier-glasses rose to the ceiling; the ottomans were covered with the richest amber damask, as were the chairs; the curtains were of the same colour and material; the cabinets were of walnut-wood elaborately carved; the walls were decorated

with some pictures of considerable excellence and value; indeed, the room altogether was befitting the wealth and social position of a merchant prince.

Mr. Shorland sat on an easy chair somewhat fidgetty and snappish; he regarded these dinner parties as a necessary tax on his position, it is true, but he felt them in a degree to be a tax on his pocket also, and he was sure that they were a tax on his patience. After a day's anxiety and bustle, why should not a man be allowed to spend his evening in quiet? Are there not many who can sympathise with Mr. Shorland in this matter? But then the wheels of society must be kept turning; aged people must eat rich food and drink old wine; young ladies and gentlemen must exhibit themselves and make matches. Besides, Mr. Shorland had no love for the luxuries or the refinements of life abstractedly. He preferred handling a bale of calico to handing a lady into the drawing-room; he would rather have taken his basin of soup in the office where he had turned over millions of pounds, than have sat down to turtle and venison amid the gewgaws of fashion. Jacob, too, seemed to be uneasy, as though he were suffering from a mild attack of toothache; he did not like these parties; like a provident man, he sat down and counted their cost.

Neither did he enjoy them in themselves ; he had more pleasure in coaxing a customer than in entertaining a lady. Mrs. Shorland was smiling and good-humoured, having frequently had to pass through the same hackling process before. She was expensively dressed, but not over-dressed, and on the whole appeared about as comely, pleasant-looking a matron of eight-and-fifty as you would wish to see. Alice seemed to be in a pleasant mood also, as counteractive to that of her father and brother ; had a lively repartee for Dolman, and passed off some under-snarls from Jacob with a slight laugh. She was attired in a dark-coloured satin dress of very costly material, not over-trimmed, which in combination with the snow-white lace harmonised well with her complexion ; her jet-black hair was arranged in a very plain but judiciously chosen fashion, and the ornaments she wore were few indeed, but rare, well selected, and tastefully distributed.

‘By Jove!’ whispered Dolman to Monkhouse, as they were sauntering before a portfolio of drawings, while the Shorlands were arranging some matters of precedence, ‘that Miss Shorland looks “beautiful exceedingly ;” I must take care lest I fall in love with her instead of the heiress.’

‘And a pretty mess you would make of it,’

replied Monkhouse. 'Do you suppose yon rich old fellow would allow his daughter to marry a beggarly three-hundred-a-year? He would far rather give her away to his book-keeper, who is most likely a rising young man, and has a good prospect of advancement.'

'Well, well,' said Dolman, 'perhaps he may wait till he is asked.'

Ring! ring! Up drove Miss Frumpington, the heiress, first of all. Her equipage and she were consistent in their general aspect; in all their parts they harmonised to the formation of a perfect whole. Her horses were a pair of fat greys; her coachman was very lusty; her butler was corpulent also; her carriage, too, was heavy and sleep-inspiring. Her father had been a prosperous commission agent, and on his death she had come into possession of the fat greys, fat coachman, fat butler, and fat carriage, with five thousand a year. Miss Frumpington herself agreed admirably with her set-out. She seemed about forty, but perhaps her tallness and her bulkiness might add a year or two in appearance to her age. Her face was full and flabby, and slightly pitted by the small-pox; her eyes peeped from behind little hillocks of flesh; her cheeks hung heavily and loosely, vibrating like a plate of muffins in convulsions; her chin had three tiers; her

bust was protuberant and ponderous. Miss Frumpington, are you addicted to hot luncheons and bottled porter? Do you love savoury viands and nutritious fluids? Did not Mr. Frumpington leave behind him fat cellars as well as fat servants? She was dressed in yellow satin, of material as rich as could be produced, and she glittered with costly gems; as she was fresh from the manipulations of a fashionable milliner, her dress was frightfully superfluous in the lower parts, expanding what need not have been expanded, and wretchedly scanty in the higher, exposing what need not have been exposed.

‘By Jove!’ whispered Dolman to Monkhouse, ‘I hardly dare tackle the heiress.’

‘Sir Timothy Brierly, Lady Brierly, Miss Brierly, and Mr. Timothy Brierly!’ and in marched the four Brierlies. Sir Timothy was a little fussy man, with every desire to make himself agreeable, addicted somewhat unnecessarily to ‘washing his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water;’ he seemed to be all life, and excessively fond of letting off small jokes; he had been so much in the habit of dealing with periodical returns in stock and finance, that he had come unconsciously to regard everything ‘on an average’ in his ordinary conversation. Coming up to Dolman, he

commenced with him a fire of conversational crackers, which, if not brilliant enough to have singed the carpet, passed muster sufficiently well as ante-prandial fireworks. He had been Mayor of Yarndale a few years before, when her Majesty had visited it on some public occasion, and he had then received the honour of knighthood, much to the satisfaction of the citizens for whose welfare he had presided over the borough. He had large factories in Yarndale, and was reputed to be a man of great wealth. He had risen from a small beginning, and as he had married early in life, the manners of Lady Brierly, though not repulsive, were certainly not refined. There is a great difference among females in taking polish from the friction of society; some adapt themselves to their rising circumstances with wonderful pliability; others retain in their wealth the same manners they had in their poverty. Lady Brierly had made a certain progress in the art of politeness, it is true; but many in her position would have achieved more. The defect of early advantages is of course most observable in the lady; the gentleman, from his rough intercourse with the world, generally acquires a manner which suits his circumstances sufficiently well, but the lady has less opportunity of improvement, while

more is required from her. Miss Brierly was a young lady, well dressed, rather pretty, and apparently without any distinctive mental characteristics. Mr. Timothy was a dashing youth of six-and-twenty, combining in himself a small amount of business-aptitude with a large amount of pleasure-seeking. He was not above a love of money, nor a certain cleverness at driving a hard bargain, if the opportunity came in his way; but he considered that he had qualifications superior to these. He tolerated buying and selling as a means to an end; but he had no fondness for bobbins and train-oil in the abstract. He kept two or three prancing steeds, drove a high-trotter, and went out hunting now and then with Sir Shackleton Shackleton's fox-hounds. Timothy, Jun., would never have made his father's money if he had commenced the business, and whether he will keep it together in the firm after Sir Timothy's death is a problem which time only will solve. In Yarndale, money as a rule does not remain in a family more than three generations, owing to the fact that the young men in the first and second descent forget to continue honest, hard-working tradesmen, and become gentlemen sportsmen or gamblers—neglecting a business which demands constant caution, attention, and personal care, and at

the same time dissipating capital in a red jacket or on a race-course.¹ So, Timothy, beware! He could not be called an ill-looking man; nay, some ladies might perhaps have considered him handsome; his features were not ill-favoured, but they were cast in a somewhat coarse mould; his complexion was florid, and his hair inclining to red. His dress was unexceptionable, and his jewellery abundant and expensive; but under every covering of adventitious refinement with which education and wealth had invested him, a close observer would have detected strong marks of a rude behaviour, low taste, and sensual disposition. He had contracted that abruptness of manner which is frequently a consequence of buying and selling, and that hardness of feeling which often follows upon the management and control of many servants; but he was ever wishful to cast a halo round these business attainments, by letting society know that he was a gentleman who could ride his horse over a five-barred gate and make up a book on the Derby. In token that he had a soul above shuttles and calicoes, he wore a moustache of bushy plentitude, and whiskers pendant like the ears of a

¹ There is a quaint vernacular expression in South Lancashire illustrative of this truth: 'There's nobbut three generations fro' elegs to elogs.'

tame rabbit. Whatever may be Timothy's lot in life, he was not certainly born to be crushed under the weight of his own diffidence and modesty.

Other equipages drove up in succession; Mr. Groomsbridge, the banker—with his wife and daughter, a pretty girl in white muslin—was announced; and immediately after Alderman Morton, with his son, a young man lately entered at St. John's, Cambridge; Mr. Levy, a Jew of fabulous wealth, came next with Mrs. Levy; others also appeared; so that more than twenty were now assembled in the drawing-room. The gentlemen kept up among themselves a running conversation upon current prices of merchandise, for it had been market day, and the ladies sat in impregnable array, rather silent and demure, unstarched as yet both in their cambric and conversation. 'Mr. Dolman, allow me to introduce you to Miss Frumpington—Miss Frumpington, Mr. Dolman;' and the Frumpingtonian chin descended a mere trifle. 'Miss Brierly, permit me to introduce to you Mr. Monkhouse.' 'Dinner is on the table!' was the grateful announcement, for there is no severer trial than to be forced to make yourself agreeable on an empty stomach; the procession is marshalled, Sir Timothy escorting Mrs. Shorland, and the guests are

comfortably seated after the preliminary difficulties. The dinner was everything that the most fastidious epicure could desire; and it was manifest that Mr. Shorland, although he despised ancestry, which had done nothing for him, and had come into possession of no heirlooms in the way of precious metals, had made amends for the deficiency by collecting a large amount of expensive silver plate, and having his crest somewhat ostentatiously engraven on it.

‘A marvellous place, indeed, is Yarndale,’ Dolman rattled on to his neighbour the heiress; he had tried her on two or three topics before, but had found her desperately heavy in the hand, as became her substance,—now he was determined to touch her up on a subject which must be intelligible to her,—‘it is a place of marvels, is Yarndale, in the way of industry—a beehive, in which all are workers and there are no drones.’

Now, Miss Frumpington knew no more of these wonders than had Dolman the evening before; nor perhaps had she any desire to remember that her honey had come out of this beehive; so, she answered with a short ejaculation, finished her plate of turtle, and took her glass of liqueur. Dolman was evidently overweighted. He had been too heavily handicapped.

‘Have you seen all the lions of Yarnsdale to-day?’ inquired Mrs. Shorland of Dolman; she was within an easy earshot, and had perceived that the heiress, entrenched within her fortress of passive resistance, was bomb-proof against his battery of words.

‘Yes, I assure you we have not been idle. We were on ’Change when it was full of merchants and manufacturers from all parts; and, though we were told that the aggregate property of those men would purchase a kingdom, they seemed to me but ordinary-looking mortals after all. An old man was pointed out to us as worth a million, whose wardrobe, as far as we saw of it, might fetch three-and-sixpence at the shop of a liberal pawnbroker or speculative rag-gatherer. Then, what very ugly buildings those factories are, with their long, unsightly chimneys! And what funny creatures those girls look in their pinafores, as they are attending to their bobbins and shuttles!’

‘Had you never seen a factory before?’ inquired Miss Groomsbridge, in surprise.

‘No—never; nor a calico-printing establishment; nor a machine-shop. I had worn calicoes or linens since I was a baby, but had never seen the process of making them till to-day; I had seen printed cloths of various kinds, but how they were produced I had never thought till I

came here; I had ridden behind locomotives, but till this morning I had no idea how they were constructed. Has Miss Groomsbridge ever been at a hop-picking?’

‘No, I have not.’

‘Well, then, we are on an equality so far. I have lived among growing hops.’

‘You went over a warehouse, I presume?’

‘Yes; we inspected Mr. Shorland’s. What palaces some of them are in their architecture! What piles of all kinds of goods are packed throughout those immense buildings!—goods destined, as we were told, for every quarter of the globe—goods of every description, from the richest satin velvet to a stay-lace.’

Miss Frumpington started slightly at the sound of such an article, turned to her slice of turkey, and allowed the servant to fill her champagne glass to the brim.

‘Indeed,’ Dolman rattled on, perceiving the heiress’s spirituality of feeling, ‘the assortment of articles we saw in Mr. Shorland’s warehouse was wonderful in their variety; I saw that a large stock had been laid in of red materials, or, as the salesman described it, in the red department, and I asked him if this had been done because it was leap-year.’

‘Why so?’

‘It may be very foolish; but, in our part

of the country it is held, by some unremembered charter, to be a lady's privilege in Leap Year to make the choice of the gentleman she prefers. Now, the only terms, as I have heard, on which the gentleman to whom the proposal is made can escape—I was never in such a dilemma myself—is by making the lady a present of a red petticoat; and so—'

Miss Groomsbridge laughed; but Miss Frumington grunted, and slightly shook her pendulous chin; then, clearing a large plateful of rich pudding, she washed it down with a full glass of old sherry. Thenceforward Dolman was obliged to give her up; so he directed his remarks to others, and watched the heiress as she went through her work of eating and drinking, making a business of it.

Now, while Dolman was endeavouring to raise the world in the shape of Miss Frumington, but, like the Greek philosopher, had not found the *πὸν στῶ*, Monkhouse was trying assiduously to ingratiate himself into the good opinion of Miss Brierly—a lady not particularly active in her mental movements, nor fluent in their expression. There is always some difficulty in keeping up a stream of conversation, and perhaps more in setting it flowing at first, when two neighbours at table are entirely ignorant of each other's antecedents. The

colloquy, after some meteorological common-places have passed, must commence by a few random casts of the rod and line, if perchance the fly, delicately laid on, may elicit a rise; and especially is this trying to mortal patience when your neighbour has the ugly fashion of answering with a grunt or a monosyllable. Miss Brierly was not so inanimate as that; but, whether from a sense of her dignity, as being the daughter of a knight, or from a suspicion that Monkhouse was going to make love to her, or from habitual taciturnity, she foiled Monkhouse's insinuating questions by a guarded reply in a few short words.

'Who is the clergyman of your church?' asked Monkhouse, falling back upon what he thought a very generic topic; 'you will have, no doubt, some celebrated preachers in Yarn-dale and the neighbourhood.'

'We go to chapel,' was the brief answer.

Monkhouse was at first in doubt whether the chapel was a dissenting one; but on further inquiry he was convinced that their minister, the Rev. Dr. McThwacker, was a nonconformist divine of some importance. To Monkhouse there was something startling in this discovery. Probaby he had never sat at dinner with a dissenter in his life; into whatever society he had gone, he would have assumed as beyond doubt

that, if an Englishman, his next neighbour was a member of the Established Church. He knew nothing of the species Dissenter or the habits belonging to it: he had read of the Puritans, and in some regards admired them; but the only visible personations of nonconformity that had ever come before him were a few turbulent ranters in the village that adjoined his father's park. It therefore seemed to him passing strange, on first thoughts, that the young lady by his side, dressed in the height of fashion, adorned with gems, the daughter of a titled gentleman, should be a dissenter. 'Then,' he mused, 'does that fast-looking man opposite, whose life must be a continued effort after a coarse gentility, attend the Meeting House with all those jeweller's wares upon him? It is odd enough, certainly; but we have seen to-day many strange sights in Yarndale.'

What, however, was singular to Monkhouse, was a common phase of society in Yarndale. When Miss Brierly said, 'We go to chapel,' she spoke of it as an event that was not in the least surprising. The fluctuations of trade in a city of such large mercantile proportions are unceasing; there is a perpetual ebb-and-flow in the Pactolus-stream; poor men become rich, and rich men poor, on very short notice. A boy brought up in an Independent or Wesleyan

Sunday-school may become Mayor of the city, and from such a point had the career of Sir Timothy Brierly commenced. A churchman is very rarely chosen to be Mayor of Yarndale; not that there is any objection to a churchman, as such; but as liberal opinions prevail among the thriving men of the city, and dissenters most frequently appear in political agitations, the corporate honours there have mostly fallen upon this class.

In the very imperfect acquaintance with the society of Yarndale which Monkhouse had at that time acquired, it would have been still more surprising to him if he had been told that he was then on a visit to a family who had been dissenters. From his youth Mr. Shorland had somehow been mixed up with the dissenting body; perhaps he had been seized upon as a rising young man by some zealous promoter of a particular interest. At all events, he had been thrown into the stream of nonconformity; not that he made much splash in the water; he was carried down the current in a very log-like fashion. To tell the truth, Mr. Shorland cared very little about either dissent or churchmanship; he simply took his religious creed as it came, and, being no subtle theologian, he made no labour over it: he received it with a much easier trust

than a purchaser's word. When he moved into the country to his present mansion, he thought he might just as well attend the neighbouring church, and Mrs. Shorland, who had never been a willing dissenter, was well pleased to strengthen his purpose. Mr. Jacob, however, had still a liking for dissent; whenever he went into Yarndale on the Sunday, he "sat under" Dr. McThwacker; indeed, it was rumoured that Jacob himself had occasionally held forth to the brethren, and beyond all doubt he carried about with him that peculiar manner and tone which some nonconformists assume. Jacob had a dark muzzle, white teeth, and a nasal tone; he took high religious ground on every subject, and from it looked somewhat superciliously on his fellow-beings; he advocated, in short, practices of very dubious morality, and he backed them up with very inapposite texts of Scripture.

After the ladies had retired, the conversation centred itself round the host, two and two here and there keeping up an irregular dialogue in an under-tone.

'You were in our warehouse to-day, I heard,' said Mr. Shorland to Dolman. 'What did you think of our stock? Are you any judge of such things? I suppose you know a jacconet from a gingham?'

‘Indeed, sir, I should pass a very bad competitive examination, if I were to offer myself to you as a salesman. By the way, what brisk fellows those salesmen are! What amused me most in your warehouse was their extreme anxiety to get off their goods. One of them, a keen-looking rogue, taking us for customers, came up smiling to Monkhouse, asked after his wife and family, and hoped that he had been well satisfied with the last parcel he had sold him; he began to talk about ‘greys,’ ‘domestics,’ ‘twills,’ ‘t. cloths,’ and ‘ginghams’; he spoke about certain light muslins that were having a brisk run during the summer months; and unrolling a long train of some material or other with a jaunty action, he declared that if he could only gratify our tastes, he should consider himself the happiest fellow in the world.’

‘Aye,’ muttered Mr. Shorland, meditatively, ‘that was Jobson, I’ll answer for it—capital salesman, Jobson—worth his weight in gold.’

‘Verily, I believe that by his insinuating ways he would have inveigled Monkhouse into a purchase; but, as I rarely lose my presence of mind in danger, I determined to rescue both of us from temptation. I went up to the captivating man, and in an “aside,” I whispered—

“Mind what you are doing—it is scarcely two months since my companion here made a compromise at Uttoxeter for eighteen pence in the pound!”

‘What did he say,’ inquired Mr. Groomsbridge, ‘when he understood your joke?’

‘Understood my joke? He had not the slightest idea but that I was in earnest. That young man with his round head and determined look, I’ll answer for it, never either passed a joke or perceived a joke in his warehouse.’

‘Noble fellow, Jobson!’ muttered Mr. Shorland.

‘What he might do at his free-and-easy, I cannot tell; but, surrounded by his goods, you could not have got the spark of a joke out of him, if you had laid his head on an anvil and applied to it a sledge-hammer. That man saw things as they were; he saw them as things manufactured to be sold for a profit, and sell them he would; he viewed a blanket as a blanket—a petticoat as a petticoat.’

‘Well, sir,’ retorted Mr. Shorland, sharply, ‘and how would *you* view them? Is a blanket anything but a blanket, or a petticoat anything but a petticoat?’

‘Why, perhaps not in *rerum natura*—’

‘In what?’

‘Perhaps it is not in itself; but if it were

my case, I should bring imagination to bear upon the article in question. I declare I could moralise much upon a flannel petticoat, or a pair of silk stockings, or a piece of cambric, or a few yards of fustian. Think, sir, upon the probable uses of that petticoat. Is the owner to be old or young, narrow or expansive in build? The silk stockings will have to be drawn on for a ball; the cambric will adorn some lovely neck; the corduroy will creak on some ostler or navy. A man only lives half a life who sees things precisely as they are. Wordsworth makes it a severe reflection on Peter Bell—that

A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

‘You are talking foolishly, sir,’ Mr. Shorland broke in impetuously; ‘your language is that of an inexperienced young man fresh from Oxford. Neither Mr. Wordsworth nor yourself, sir, would ever have made a salesman.’

The conversation then took a more general turn. The Corporation, and indeed the whole city, were at that time in a commotion about the selection of a site for a new post-office. Each man had his opinion upon the question, and by a strange coincidence each man thought the site nearest to his place of business was the

very best that could be chosen for the public interests of the town. Mr. Alderman Morton delivered his sentiments on the subject in an oracular manner, as though he were addressing the Borough Council; he declared, moreover, as Chairman of the Drainage Committee, that the sewers were in a delightful condition, and as fragrant as new-mown hay. Mr. Levy, too, and Mr. Groomsbridge had a mild controversy about some loan in which the Rothschilds had advanced largely; they discussed also certain points in the Currency question, and some of the bearings of the Bank Act; during which time Dolman found out that the Port was particularly fine flavoured. At last the conversation settled upon the turn-out of Mr. Shorland's mill-hands, which had been maintained already a fortnight, and seemed likely to continue much longer.

'I have no patience with these people,' said Mr. Shorland, addressing the whole table; 'they are an ungrateful set. What would they have? After being treated in the most liberal manner, they turn out for an advance of wages. They think that times are brisk and they can bully me! The fools! Yes, and they are using the most threatening and seditious language. Are they not, Jacob?'

'Yes, they are, for sure,' replied the son; 'I

went into Mudlington yesterday to look after the Mills, and I was glad to get out safe. Three strong women came close up to me ; one called me a skinny, snivelling toad, and threatened to pitch me into the mill-dam. I told them to "let their moderation be known unto all men," when another of them said, if moderation meant clemming,¹ it was known already ; and the third declared that they would give me a moderate ducking unless I made myself scarce. "Thou 'rt a bad son of a bad father," one said ; "Thou 'rt worse than old Shorland," shouted a second ; and the third added, with an oath, "The devil will carry thee off on his back some day with thy Scriptur' read back'ards way."

When the party had reached the drawing-room, each, as usual, followed his inclination, either to make himself agreeable or to while away the time by some means till his carriage arrived. Dolman had been dead beaten by Miss Frumpington,—knocked out of the ring bodily,—so he commenced a general conversation with Mrs. McCorkindale, a lady of round, pleasant, good-humoured features, and of rather portly dimensions. Her husband was

¹ Suffering from hunger—a term used by old English writers, as for instance Marston, Massinger, and Ben Johnson.

an iron-master, and of Scottish extraction; but having once found himself a thriving man at Yarndale, he adopted the wise determination of his countrymen to remain in Old England and get fat on its roast beef, rather than recross the Tweed and luxuriate on meal porridge.

‘Where is McCorkindale?’ said the lady to Dolman, in a restless tone; ‘I’m so anxious about McCorkindale.’

‘Why, ma’am?’ asked Dolman. ‘Is he unwell? Or is he subject to attacks of illness? I thought he played his part respectably at dinner; and, after dinner, I think he could recognise good Port.’

‘Yes, but, sir, he is liable to singular attacks. I cannot tell how it is, but they come on at stated times, and in the queerest way possible. I cannot make it out, try as I may; and our medical man seems to know no more than I do, for he says nothing.’

‘Indeed, ma’am, I am very sorry; but it cannot be anything serious, I imagine; for your husband looks so ruddy and robust.’

‘O no, you are quite mistaken: McCorkindale is delicate—very delicate—tender as a chicken. I will just tell you how it is with him. Are you in the medical profession, sir?’

‘No; but I have lived with an uncle who is.’

‘Then listen to me. Every evening about half-past eight McCorkindale has such a weakness in his knees: his legs tremble like a shaky table, and I’ve sometimes to support him to the sofa lest he totter and fall. I do not know how it is, but it comes on invariably every evening about half-past eight. It is a very strange complaint.’

‘O no; not so very strange, after all, I’ll be bound for it. You may class the complaint under its proper head in the category of medical ailments.’

‘O dear me, sir! I wish you would give me the information.’

‘Why, ma’am, it is evidently this: there is a sickness called the ague, which consists of shaking and tottering; it comes on at stated intervals; there is the quotidian ague, that which comes on every day,—the tertian ague, that which appears every third day, and so on. Now, Mr. McCorkindale’s ailment is clearly the quotidian ague: it arises simply from a change of climate and from adopting a fresh dietary.’

‘Thank you, sir: I’m really much obliged for the information. But will it be attended with danger?’

‘O no: you may be sure, he will live out of it.’

‘I shall never forget your kindness, sir; I shall never be out of your debt.’

Ladies are sometimes over-suspicious with their husbands, sometimes over-charitable in ‘thinking no evil.’ However, from the diagnosis of Mr. McCorkindale’s complaint it might have been reduced to simple causes. Every evening, after dinner, about six o’clock, he was left alone in his dining-room, with the ‘Times’ in his hand, and a full, large bottle of strong Port wine by his side. This gradually wasted away, and as the wine decreased the weakness of Mr. McCorkindale’s knees increased; so that there may have been some connection between the two phenomena, especially as the tottering ague was duly concurrent with the emptied decanter. But Mrs. McCorkindale could not tell how possibly his attack should come on with such regularity: she said it was entirely beyond her comprehension.

Music and singing followed as usual. Miss Shorland, who was anxious to please, joined in a duet with Mr. Timothy Brierly, apparently not for the first time. She sang fairly, and with feeling; he moderately, and without feeling. Still it passed off, and the execution of the song, which was one of the modern school, was much applauded.

‘Do you not sing, Mr. Dolman?’ inquired

Miss Shorland; 'I half suspect you do. Mr. Monkhouse, will you not confirm my belief?'

'Certainly,' said Monkhouse, 'we see "the mind, the music breathing from his face." I have a recollection that he once sang for the gratification of the Head of our College; perhaps he may repeat his performance here?'

'I assure you, Miss Shorland,' answered Dolman, 'my singing is far too good for un-professional ears; on a fitting occasion I may probably give you a specimen of it.'

'Dr. Linton, the Principal, was not a professional musician, was he?'

'Not exactly; he happened to hear me warbling a plaintive air; and liking it so well, he desired me to translate it for him into Doric Greek.'

'A modern air, I suppose it would be, with a classical accompaniment.'

Others sang; many chattered; some dozed; and in due time carriages arrived, and the company separated in good humour.

'You have made no way with the heiress,' said Frederick Shorland to Dolman; 'I never saw you so put down, except (aside), like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, it was by "canary." Cheer up, man! Faint heart ne'er won a lady fair.'

‘Would a courageous heart win a lady *fair* in this instance?’

‘For shame, Mr. Dolman!’ remonstrated Mrs. Shorland.

‘I tell you what,’ observed Dolman to Monkhouse, musingly, as they were alone before retiring to their rooms; ‘that red-haired nanny-goat is going to marry Miss Shorland. Did you not see how he paid her attention, as though it were not for the first time? Did you not remark how the two fathers seemed tacitly to acquiesce in the arrangement?’

‘Well, and what then? Two fortunes, I suppose, will come together. Are you jealous of the handsome young man?’

‘Jealous! not I. Only she is too good to be thrown away on such a conceited booby.’

‘He has plenty of money.’

‘What does that matter?’

‘A vast deal, I fancy, both in Yarndale and elsewhere.’

‘I have a pretty fair judgment in the matter of women,’ continued Dolman, ‘and you may depend on it she has a vast deal more character about her than we have yet found out. I could not tell in the least whether she has any liking for young Timothy, for her countenance is impenetrable as granite and insolvable as a

Chinese puzzle. It is as difficult to extract her secret sentiments as it is the cube root.'

'Go to bed, my stricken Romeo, and sleep off your jealous fit. Good night.'

CHAPTER XII.

MUDDLINGTON.

MR. SHORLAND'S factories were situated in the lowest suburb of Yarndale, bearing the name of Mudlington—a locality marked by every disagreeable feature that a manufacturing district can present. Streets ran out in various directions, ending in barren fields and brick-crofts—streets without any regularity, and in some instances without pavement, as they were not yet taken under the charge of the Town Council—streets with poetic names in their dinginess, such as Primrose Hill, Angel Meadow, Rose Mount, Paradise Row, and Eden Terrace—streets composed of low, dirty-looking houses, many of which were unlet, and had notices of all kinds decorating their fronts. In this irregular divergence of streets there was of necessity here and there a vacant plot of ground, the surface of which was enlivened by sundry half-clad children rolling about, a meditative donkey or two, some melancholy-looking ducks, a matronly sow with a numerous and lively off-

spring, and several stagnant pools of water. Scattered up and down were cottages of a better class, each with a garden in front, in which a few miserable and sickly flowers were struggling for existence. The neighbourhood far and wide abounded in every species of manufacture and industrial occupation. It had collected more than its share of those working establishments which from sanitary considerations are not permitted to come between the wind and the noses of the wealthier classes. Cotton factories raised their dense volumes of smoke, for no inspector was there to prevent it; the very tallness of the chimneys in the vitriol works did not obviate the vitiating influence of the noxious vapour that proceeded from them; establishments for soap-boiling, candle manufactories, tanneries, slaughter-houses with the concomitant processes of bone-boiling and tripe-dealing, emitted their distinctive perfumes, leaving nothing to be desired for any man of delicate olfactory organs who wished to meet with a perfect smell. Then, if the nose escaped for a while, the ear was assailed; the heavy strokes of hammers resounded from the iron-foundries, forges, machine-shops, and smelting-works; while the fire was seen glaring forth in red volumes from the chimney-tops. Glass-works were there also, distinguished by their large

circular chimneys; tile and brick-kilns were burning in the adjacent crofts; coal-pits were hard by, where the engine was drawing up its dingy loads, and men with faces as black were bustling around, emitting strange sounds intended to be articulate and expressive of corresponding ideas; and coal-pits also were scattered up and down which were extinct, having been worked out, and which were guarded at the mouth by a circular wall. The river that ran through the district was black as ink, being thoroughly impregnated with the fluid from the dye-works on its banks; and the reservoirs in the locality that were required for manufacturing purposes seemed scarcely to invite the swimmer to a bath. It would be needless to observe that a railway and a canal passed at no great distance. The shops throughout Mudlington were such as might be expected—not inviting in themselves, but dealing in the kind of goods which might be supposed to be required in such a place. There was clearly a numerical ascendancy in Taverns, Spirit-vaults, and Beer-shops, by comparison with the other houses of trade; and many of these had their windows decorated with prints of prize-fights, and programmes of sweepstakes for horse-races and running-matches. The pawnbrokers, too, manifestly kept very thriving establish-

ments. Here was a dingy building which seemed to be a preaching room; there might be seen a Roman Catholic chapel of uninviting exterior; and in the centre of the district stood a Meeting House of some pretensions for Wesleyan or Primitive Methodists, called Bethesda Chapel, against the walls of which were placarded notices that the gospel was there preached in its truth, and that Mormonism, which was gaining ground in the district, would be exploded from the Bethesda pulpit on the next Sabbath. Broad sheets announcing foot-races and rabbit-coursing were posted against gable-ends, and notices of Loan Societies were exhibited in large letters on walls and in shop windows. Such was Mudlington, a suburb of Yarndale, a Ward Section of the Borough—not particularly interesting or inviting as a residence, but the source of no little wealth to many proprietors of industrial establishments there, who drew from it their profits, but did not inhale its breezes.

About seven o'clock on the evening after that of Mr. Shorland's dinner-party, it was evident that Mudlington was in a state of some excitement. Placards had been posted up and handbills distributed, announcing that there would be a meeting of sympathy with the turn-

outs of Messrs. Shorland's factories on Mount Pleasant, which was the largest open space in the locality, and that suitable addresses would be delivered by several well-known characters. Some time before the appointed hour, the place began to be astir; groups of strange-looking beings were seen conversing together here and there; clusters of operatives were wending their way from all the neighbouring streets towards Mount Pleasant, which was the usual gathering-place on occasions of a similar kind; the crowd was accumulating rapidly, and drawing closer to the clumsy platform from which the speakers were to address the meeting. To the physiognomist a gathering of this kind might be an agreeable sight, inasmuch as the various countenances would afford him abundant matter for speculation; to the philanthropist few spectacles could be more repulsive. Old men and old women, tottering and decrepit, were struggling with the crowd; young boys and girls were mixed with the rest; colliers, with their faces coal-black, were elbowing their way—individuals to whom an up-and-down fight was a pleasant recreation after working-hours; boatmen, with their cotton caps, mixed with the crowd,—a class as uncivilised as our country can produce; factory-operatives—men and women, with pale faces and emaciated

frames—constituted a large portion of the assemblage; mechanics unwashed from their work had come to assist in the demonstration; and, what form always the most dangerous elements in a mob, there was a large number of those hulking hobble-de-hoys between sixteen and twenty years of age, who are quite indifferent to consequences, with a considerable sprinkling of stout desperate women to encourage the reckless and to join themselves in any fray that might spring up. If a physiognomist had examined the individual countenances of the crowd, which now amounted to several thousands, he would scarcely have discovered one that had the characteristic of benevolence upon it. Faces pale, dogged, un-intellectual, and threatening, predominated; and where a naturally pleasing aspect was seen, it was then marked by ill-feeling and vindictiveness. More and more of all trades came flocking up, and the large area called Mount Pleasant was fast filling; men were moving about the crowd, distributing handbills in which the factory grievances were enumerated and discussed; on the outside of the assemblage a ballad-singer was perambulating, having a pipe stuck in one side of his mouth, and crying out from the other the names of his songs, which for the most part had a reference to the

turn-out; while a companion at no great distance was singing very lustily a favourite ditty, the refrain being—

On the ten per cent. we are intent,
And the devil fly away with old Shorland.

Soon after the time appointed, some four or five men ascended the platform amidst vociferous cheering. They were mostly rough and somewhat ungainly personages, but evidently endowed with a strong will and a stubborn determination. One or two of them had countenances of a sinister cast, indicating a certain degree of cunning and self-interestedness; but the others had a manly and resolute aspect, as though they believed in the justice of their cause, and looked forward to the triumph of their principles. After two speeches had been delivered, one of the leaders, by the name of Charnock, came forward to address the enormous throng, amounting now to eight or ten thousand. He was a man of more pleasing aspect and genial manner than his fellows on the platform, and did not carry the appearance of being a professional agitator. He was met by loud expressions of applause, and from his straightforward bearing he seemed to deserve the approbation of the crowd. He spoke in something like the following terms, with an accent marked by considerable refinement,

using just enough action to carry off his unadorned but fluent address. ‘Men and women,’ he said, raising his voice so as to be heard over a large portion of the throng—‘men and women, we are met here to withstand oppression and wrong. We are met as poor, but honest and independent working people, to resist the tyranny of the rich and powerful. (Loud cheers.) Now, let me advise you, first, to resist as free men under the protection of the law; never break the law, or your oppressors will have the advantage of you. Break no machinery, do no damage, commit no assault on your fellow-workmen who would prove false to your cause; insult no one; but do not go in to your work till you have justice. (“We won’t”.) You have as much right to employ the labour of your arms and hands, where you will and when you will, as Mr. Shorland has to employ that capital of his which he has wrung from the sweat of the poor man’s brow and the activity of the poor girl’s fingers. (Loud cheers.) How have you been treated? How do the factory owners hereabouts treat their workpeople, as a rule? Why, they get as much as they can out of your blood and bone, and they give you as little as they can for it. (Applause.) Has it not been so at Shorland’s factory? (“It has, it has.”)

The machinery there is old, and you have not had a fair chance on that account. Then your cotton has been bad—I need not tell you how much more trouble it is to work up bad materials than good—and yet you have been expected to get as much off with inferior stuff, as if it had been all of better quality. You have been ground down, too, by fines and batings for every little defect in your work, so that your wages have often been but light in your fingers at the week-end. (“That’s true.”) And with a ten hours’ Bill, you are required from the speeding of the engine and looms to get as much work off as ever you did. (“More, more.”) And besides all this, Shorland does not give you a fair wage for your work. We know the price of cotton; we know the price of manufactured goods; we know, therefore, what wages a master should allow, if he wishes to do fairly between himself and his work-people; and I say that Shorland is underpaying you—beating you down—grinding you to the dust.’

A voice from the crowd: ‘That’s a lie!’

‘A lie, is it? Why, you know, every one of you that has worked at Shorland’s Mills, that it’s true as gospel. A lie! Can you persuade a working man or woman that ten shillings are

twelve? Can you make a person believe that he is well fed, when he has only two meals a day? A power-loom weaver who has bad stuff to work up, and is pestered with breakages and stoppages,—can you insense her into the notion that her materials are good and her labour is light? Can you tell me in reason that the sun is not setting before my eyes,—that sun which looks down on so much oppression and injustice in his daily course? Can you prove to me that there is not a large crowd in front of me—a crowd of hungry people, willing to give a fair day's work for a fair day's wage? Remember what Scripture says—"He that oppresseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker." But, my friends, see that you continue quiet and orderly, and we will try what we can do in your defence and for your support. Recollect these two things,—Don't go in to work, and beware of breaking the law. Our agents are now going through the different manufacturing towns, and we shall collect enough for your weekly maintenance.'

Another voice from the crowd: 'You'll keep the money among yourselves, as you always do. You're a humbug and a deluder of the poor people for your own ends.'

'Am I? Have I anything to gain from the hands being out of work? Is it not ruin to me

as a shopkeeper in the neighbourhood? My end is to resist oppression and wrong, and that I will do, come what may. Take care, my friends; there are spies among you: only be on your guard, and you may laugh at Shorland's informers. Don't touch them—unless they assault you first.'

Here the speaker paused, for it was evident that matters were becoming critical in the dense crowd. In half-a-dozen different places there was a surging of heads, as though collisions were commencing; soon each tossing vortex grew more rough and rapid; and it became quite manifest that some brisk fights were going on in the throng, so far as the pressure of human bodies would permit the exercise of pugilistic powers. Then, these tumultuous spots enlarged by degrees, as is always the case, like the expanding circles of so many whirlpools; one vortex soon reached its neighbour, and the two whirled round together with a lashing, foaming fury; and so on, till the whole crowd became one mighty maelstrom, and nothing was seen far and wide but pulling, hauling, tumbling, fighting—nothing was heard but imprecations, threatenings, shriekings, and cries of distress. Policemen had been stationed up and down in anticipation of some breach of the peace; but they

could not act with any efficiency in such a general turmoil. They might as well have tried to grapple with a cloud of dust, or a flock of sheep, as ten thousand men, women, and children, in a state of frantic excitement.

CHAPTER XIII.

MUDDLINGTON IN COMMOTION.

ON the previous evening at dinner, Monkhouse and Dolman had heard that Mr. Shorland's operatives at Mudlington had turned out; and they were wishful to see something of the people in that neighbourhood. On the morning of that day, they had called upon Graham, in order to gain some information about the locality, and he had told them that there was to be a meeting on Mount Pleasant the same evening, when some speeches would be delivered, and they would have an opportunity of studying there the character of the population. Monkhouse, Dolman, and Frederick Shorland, who by the way had scarcely been in the district before, attended the meeting accordingly; but they had not in the least expected the disturbance that arose. In the crush to get within hearing of the speakers they had been separated, and now in different parts of the crowd they found themselves involved in the surging, rolling, tossing billows of conflict that

raged on every side ; indeed, they became more particularly objects of remark and attack from their fashionable style of dress, which was more consistent with High Street, Oxford, on a sunny afternoon, than with Mudlington in an uproar.

Now all the while Dolman, who was on the skirts of the crowd, and not very far from a side of the platform, had been listening very attentively to the oratory ; he felt a kind of admiration for the rough-and-ready eloquence of the last speaker, who seemed to be a man of sound common sense and stirring sincerity, tinctured though it probably was with strong prejudice. At this time his attention was diverted from the platform, and he began to watch with much interest the wild confusion and conflict that were gathering from all quarters, and were likely soon to agitate the whole crowd. He was wondering where Monkhouse and Shorland were, and felicitating himself that for once in his life he was in a more eligible position than his neighbours ; when, lo ! he was suddenly confronted by several heavy, muscular women, who had the look about them of being ugly customers in a row. Dressed in bed-gowns, they exhibited arms of no ordinary strength, stout, round, and red as a boiled lobster ; and as you scanned the dimension of their persons downwards, you might have

thought twice before you entered the wrestling ring with the weakest of them.

‘Here’s a fine chap for you!’ shouted one of the Amazons, pointing to Dolman; ‘he’s come to see how poor folk live, I warrant.’

‘He smells like a druggister’s shop with his scented handkerchief,’ said another.

‘He stinks like a poucat (polecat)!’ interposed a third, whose olfactory nerves were somewhat perverted.

‘Let’s see how he’ll smell when we’ve rolled him i’ th’ channel!’ added a fourth.

‘You’re too bad, Betty,’ a fifth struck in, who was herself a buxom, well-looking damsel, — ‘he’s a gradely nice young fellow; he’s quite a honey-dear; we’ll let him off for half-a-crown to drink his health in, and a kiss apiece for luck.’

A laugh followed this speech: still matters began to look threatening, for the viragos were surrounding Dolman, and drawing the net closer, as if bent on mischief. He, poor fellow, was in utter perplexity; never was mortal taken more by surprise. Did the furies mean to do battle? Would he be compelled to engage with them in a stand-up fight? Or, was it only banter and bravado on their part? He had beaten a bargeman, but he could not hit out at women. He reasoned with Macbeth,

‘What man dare, I dare;’ but the impending struggle, if it were to come to that, was scarcely man’s work. He had, however, but short time for reflection, for they advanced towards him, flourishing their arms, some before and some behind him, and evidently skirmishing for an opening in his guard. Dolman rushed about with his usual activity, threw himself into a fighting attitude, danced, dodged, and squared, with the semblance of a terrific earnestness, and by practising some desperate feints at the ribs of the stoutest Dahomeyan, and at a protuberant portion of another, he managed to keep them at bay for a while. But all would not avail: the one in front was closing with him after a most determined fashion, when he caught her by the wrists and held her as firmly as he could. But unluckily at the same moment one behind clasped him round the neck, and fastened him as in a vice. Dolman, who boasted that he never lost his presence of mind in danger, saw at once that he was in a fix, and that no time was to be lost; so he gave the struggling damsel in front the Kentish trip, which brought her flat upon her back, while he fell upon her; and the fury behind fell upon him. For the time he was almost in the condition of the innocents in the Tower undergoing the process

of smothering between two feather beds. The lady who was undermost screamed and scratched and kicked furiously, while the one above pulled him violently by the hair, and boxed his ears savagely; a third ran for a broom, and, as the uppermost woman rose, began to belabour his back downward with the unclean instrument after a cruel manner. 'Worse and worse!' thought Dolman, with that marvellous rapidity of perceiving danger and conceiving a way of escape, which almost invariably accompanies a case of sudden and extreme peril. 'Here am I: am I to be murdered by female fiends, or am I to make my escape by giving one or two a slight tap on the bread-basket?' So with a desperate effort he rose, threw himself clear of his entanglements, opened out a way by a pretended lunge or two at the less furious, and by administering a real smack to the heroine with the broom, which stopped for a moment her respiratory organs, and made off with all expedition, like one who intends to extract honour even from a retreat; when unluckily two of the she-fiends caught hold each of a coat-skirt; and, as they stuck fast at about a right-angle, he made his escape ignominiously, with his Oxford surtout split up to the collar, leaving the back part of his waistcoat visible,—with his trousers behind bearing the stripes of the

dirty besom, and his Parisian hat crushed beyond remedy out of all form and shape, like a tin canister that has been kicked about for a while in a school playground.

Monkhouse, whose demeanour in the crowd was such as not to attract notice, escaped without molestation. He was neither demonstrative in manner nor conspicuous in appearance; so that with a few jeers from some rude boys and girls he passed away from the tumult, comparatively unnoticed. With Frederick Shorland it was different; he naturally felt a vehement indignation, when he heard on all sides the heavy denunciations on his father's head, and the fierce imprecations on his family. He was, therefore, quite ready to meet half-way a challenge to the fight. Very fortunately, he happened to be in close proximity to a small knot of young men who were on the side of the employers; and to their ranks he was a welcome addition, seeing that their safety consisted in compactness and strength. The belligerents in such crowds are mostly uncouth, reckless lads of sixteen or eighteen; but when their number is so great, and the means they employ are so unscrupulous, they must in the end inflict severe punishment on a small band of opponents, even though these be superior in individual strength, and exercise it, too, with

effect. The half-dozen with whom Frederick Shorland had luckily become confederate fought their way out back to back, suffering severely from the attacks of so many, but still resolute. At length, as they reached the edge of the crowd, they were assailed with missiles of all kinds; stones, bricks, mud, a rotten cabbage or two, and a dead cat pursued the young fellows who had forced themselves so valorously from the throng. How the rest fared it is uncertain, but a brickbat hurled with violence struck Frederick Shorland on the back part of the head, laid it open, and left him senseless on the ground. What might have followed, had not two policemen come up to his rescue, it would be impossible to say; for a mob of infuriated and brutalised hobble-de-hoys has but few generous sympathies towards a prostrate foe; even the tender mercies of such a class are cruel. The rabble, however, were driven back, and Shorland was carried at once to a cottage at some distance off, the inmates of which were known to the policemen.

The cottage into which they entered was one of the better class, and was clearly occupied by a family who had higher notions of the comforts and respectabilities of life than most of their neighbours. Everything was scrupulously neat—nay, there were some evidences of con-

siderable refinement—in the room where the inmates were sitting. By permission, Shorland was conveyed inside, and laid upon the sofa, or settle, or squab, as it is variously called; he was still quite insensible, and as the blood had oozed round his neck and flowed across his pale features, he had a ghastly and shocking appearance. No sooner was he stretched upon the sofa than one of the policemen hastened off for the district surgeon of the force, and the other was hurried away in consequence of some fresh casualty, having first left directions for the proper treatment of the wounded man.

The person into whose care Shorland was committed was a young woman of some twenty years of age. There is no intention in this narrative to pourtray either supernatural beings or creatures below human nature — either Homeric deities or Yahoos—either sublimated idealisms or deformed caricatures—but plain, matter-of-fact characters, such as are met with day by day among rich and poor. It would, therefore, be contrary to the plan of this work as it would be to the truth, to represent the young female as without a parallel, even in her own station of life. Still, no one would have looked upon her once without being struck with her sweet countenance, her mild yet intelligent eye, her neat, nay elegant figure.

Her dress, manner, and mode of speaking evinced a refinement considerably above that of the operative class generally; and her hands, delicate and finely formed, carried on them no marks of manual labour.

Margaret Maxwell—for that was the young woman's name—was at first so shocked at the sight of Shorland, as he lay on the sofa motionless and bloody, with a white cloth under his head, that she felt a giddiness stealing over her, and was obliged to sit down for a few seconds lest she might fall. But she soon shook off this feeling of faintness, and, by a determined effort of the will, set herself to the work which had fallen to her lot. She fetched some warm water and cloths, with which she bathed his temples, and washed off the pools of blood that were congealing on his face and head, almost in doubt the while whether he were still alive, and only encouraged to believe the fact by a weak pulsation of the heart, which was yet perceptible. 'Poor young man!' thought Margaret; 'he may have been in some fault probably, but it is an awful thing for ruffians to treat him in this manner. He is clearly one of the upper classes from his dress and appearance, and he may have been doing something provoking to the crowd; but they who have done this deed will have much to

answer for. Would to God that these differences and contentions between rich and poor could be settled, and that all ranks might live in peace together, each striving to promote the other's good !'

'Who is there on the settle, Maggie?' asked an old woman, who was seated in an easy chair on one side the fire, apparently indifferent to what was passing around her. From her withered, weather-beaten aspect she had evidently arrived at a long age, but from the seeming, though not real, annihilation of her active powers of perception, she perhaps seemed older than she really was. On close inspection, however, her features were the lingering remains of what had once been very handsome, and her eye was singularly brilliant, when the awakening mind and will kindled up its light.

'Who is that on the settle, Maggie?' she repeated, awaking from a state of dreamy vacuity.

'It's a young gentleman, granny, who has been struck on the head in a disturbance.'

'Young gentleman!' muttered the old lady to herself—'young gentleman! always the way with these silly lasses! always dreaming about graceless lads! Young gentleman, said ye?'

'Aye, granny.'

'What has a young gentleman to do here, I

wonder? We want none on him. Let him go somewhere else.'

'Yes, but he's hurt, and stunned, and unable to stir.'

'Hurt and stunned!' replied the old dame, peevishly; 'what matters? Turn him out. These gentlemen are no friends to poor folk now-a-days. These factory owners get fat on the blood of their slaves. They ride in their gilded carriages, with their wives and daughters in silks and satins, while their work-people are starving. He'll be one of that clatch, I warrant.'

'We do not know who he is, granny.'

'Then turn him out; what business has he to bother us here?'

'Be silent, dame; you would'nt turn out a beggar that had been injured, I'm sure; that is not the lesson we learned in our campaigning—to turn the wounded man out of doors, even though he were an enemy; never refuse to give quarter to a man who has been struck down; nay, give him a drink from your canteen, if it will do him good. Is not that good Christianity, mother? Did not our Lord leave us a story about a good Samaritan? Would not Lord Wellington have given us the same advice?'

This was said by the husband of the old woman, as he sat on the opposite side of the fire.

He was a man of very striking appearance. Though he was upwards of eighty years old, and his head was white as snow, his countenance was fresh and ruddy, his posture erect, and his voice sonorous and firm. His faculties were quite clear, and his health was good; but from rheumatism, or wounds, or both, he had almost lost his powers of locomotion. He had fought in every main engagement throughout the Peninsular campaigns, and had closed his active military career after a long day on the plains of Waterloo. He was in receipt of a good pension, as a retired non-commissioned officer; and, in order to keep himself in mind that he had worked hard for it, he always wore his medals suspended on his breast, even when he was sitting by his fireside, and on the anniversaries of the Duke's great victories he had a stronger glass of grog than usual, and an extra pipe. His wife had accompanied him throughout his campaigns, and had been subject to all the attendant dangers and hardships.

'You would not refuse a cup of water even to an enemy when struck down, mother?' he continued.

'A cup of water!' she replied; 'no, nor a drop of brandy, if struck down in a fair fight. But here there is not a fair field; it is the

strong agen the weak—the full-fed agen the starving.’

‘Maybe, the rich are not so bad as you think, dame. We must not credit everything that old wives say. If we had believed everything that spiteful folk in England and Spain said of Lord Wellington, we should never have carried our banners over the Pyrenees, mother.’

‘Like enough, but that’s another matter,’ muttered the old woman, who was not willing to give up her point.

‘Then,’ continued the old soldier in a playful vein, ‘are not you one of the upper class, granny? You should stick by them through thick and thin.’

‘Ha! ha!’ chuckled the old lady, her dull eye kindling for a second; ‘it’s a vast o’ time sin’ I were one of your gentlefolk. It’s getting on for seventy years, I guess, sin’ I rode my bonny white palfrey by the side of mountain and loch in auld Scotland. But what’s the good of these old-world memories?’

‘Then,’ repeated her husband jestingly, ‘you should stick by the gentry, being one yourself by birth, I should say, dame.’

‘Stick by the gentry! There’s no real gentry hereabouts. One climbs up on another’s back, and gets his foot on his head, and presses him down to the ground. They

get rich, and their children swagger more pompously than lords and ladies.'

Then, rising with some difficulty, grandmother Maxwell moved, by the help of her stick, towards the wounded man. 'Here's blood, eh?' she muttered in a low tone. 'What?'—to her grand-daughter—'what, you silly wench, are you nearly fainting at the sight of a drop of blood? Ha! ha! instead of a young lad struck with a bit of a pebble, I have seen, girl, five thousand men, as fine soldiers as ever drew a sword, or shook a lance, or fired a gun, lying dead and dying on the battle-field! Maggie, ye'd never do for a soldier's wife. Hold up the candle, lass, and let me look at the boy. He'll come round, you'll see,' she continued, putting her withered hand to his heart; 'he'll come round, for his heart is beating stronger, and the blood is mounting slowly into his cheeks. Not an ill-looking youth either! Why, bless my life,' she went on, shading her eyes and peering into Shorland's face, 'I must have seen that countenance before; but my memory is now so bad, I canna tell where.'

It was quite true, as the old woman said, that Shorland's faculties were by degrees returning to him. He began to experience a noise in his head, like the rushing of many

waters, and to have a dreamy consciousness that he was within hearing of human voices; but he was still quite incapable of giving the least sign of awakening perception. At this time James and Mary Maxwell came in, the intermediate generation between the old people and Margaret. James, the tenant of the cottage, was in a good position as a mechanic in one of the neighbouring iron-foundries, and his wife did the housework at home. They had, with a natural curiosity, been out together to see and inquire what was going on in the neighbourhood.

‘And who is that, Maggie?’ inquired the mother. ‘Got a knock on the head, said you? Come, let me see him, poor fellow; bring the candle. Why, good gracious! this is Master Frederick Shorland! I know him quite well; I lived as housemaid with the Shorlands, you know, seven years, and I was often there working after I was married. Poor Frederick! he has had a severe blow, but he seems to be coming to himself. He was always a kind, hearty, frolicsome lad—very different from that Jacob, who was a dirty, mean, miserable toad from a child. I remember once, when his mother sent him with two halfpennies to the door for a beggar, we afterwards found that he had hidden one of them in his dress.’

The surgeon now made his appearance, and about the same time Shorland opened his eyes, and began to stare around in amazement. His wound was plastered, and a strong dose of brandy was administered to him; when he sat up and learned how matters had gone with him for the last hour. After he had returned many thanks to those who had bound up his wounds, and offered a handsome gratuity to his old acquaintance, Mrs. Maxwell, which was courteously declined, he was conveyed home in a cab.

‘Never mind,’ said the old campaigner to Shorland as he was leaving; ‘you have had a slight crack on the head with a marble; go to bed, and you will get up in the morning a little giddy, but nearly well. I once had my head slashed, and my shoulder laid open, and I lay all night in the frost among dead and dying men. You will have a more comfortable bed to-night.’

CHAPTER XIV.

WHO IS TO BLAME?

EARLY next morning there was a bustle at 'The Oaks;' for Mr. Shorland, senior, and Jacob started betimes for town. The old gentleman was churlish and snappish with all around him; he scolded his servants, scowled at his daughter, and questioned his wife savagely on the price of the eggs that were on the breakfast-table; nay, it is said that he uttered sundry profane oaths, anathematising mills, machinery, and workpeople in general, and his own in particular. Jacob seemed to be in a state of excitement also; but he did not show it in all the paternal depth and fulness. He managed to cap his father's oaths with a text of Scripture having no pertinence whatever to the subject-matter; neither did he look much less amiable than usual—which perhaps would have been a difficult physiognomical feat. Still, it would have been safer for one of the rebellious operatives to have fallen at that time into the hands of the father than the son. It

is true, the elder Shorland would have flayed the culprit, and perhaps, Apollo-like, have nailed his Marsyan hide to his factory-door; but the son would have flayed him pitilessly, pelting him all the while with Scriptural texts perverted. The father would have thrown him into a hornet's nest with a malediction; the son would have smeared him over with honey, and left him to be stung to death by wasps. Jacob, like the immortal Izaak, always dealt gently with the frog that he was hooking, as though he loved it.

On the previous evening, the disturbance had not ended with the discomfiture of Dolman and Frederick Shorland; the conflicts of which they had been the respective centres were but isolated eddies on the stream, and when these ripples had passed away the current was no less impetuous. As the shadows of evening began to darken, and individual acts were less distinguishable, the password circulated from mouth to mouth, in a subdued tone, 'To Shorland's Lower Mill;' and a crowd of reckless spirits, young, old, and middle-aged, began by common consent to move in that direction. The watchman of the factory was pacing his monotonous round, as wearisome as that of which the Æschylæan Phylax¹ complains, but

¹ Agamemnon, the opening scene.

less romantic—an old and worn-out man, who had experienced but little of the poetry of life, and who could have entered but imperfectly into the chivalrous feelings of another prototype in olden time, as drawn by Scott, when

Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The warder kept his guard;
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient border gathering song.¹

The mill-warder, however, though more prosaic, is no less watchful; he hears the distant murmur of many voices, and, listening attentively, perceives that the sound is approaching. He has witnessed similar scenes before—nay, far more serious than any of the kind which had lately occurred; he remembered the havoc perpetrated by the Ludites, and had been himself present on many occasions subsequently, when valuable property had been held cheap by an infuriated mob. He therefore looked to the bolts and fastenings of the gates, and then wisely determined to escape from the precincts, and seek the assistance of the police or the military. Onward came the crowd, consisting of some four or five thousand persons. Their passions, having gradually warmed since the commencement of the meeting, had now

¹ Marmion, ii.

reached fever-heat; and though there was comparatively little shouting or noise, it was evident that in the minds of the malcontents there was a stern determination to work mischief. For a time the thick gates of the factory resisted the attack; but among the mob there were evidently some who were accustomed to wield the heavy hammer, and the doors at length yielded to their ponderous strokes. The area inside was immediately filled with a very miscellaneous assembly, each one of whom was seeking for something or other on which he might satisfy his propensity for destruction. The most experienced in such scenes sought the engine-house, as though the mainspring of the whole establishment was there—the central power which gave motion to the thousands of spindles, and legions of looms, and all the complicated machinery that was in the building—the heart which by its heavy throbbing infused vitality to the remotest extremity of the system. It was evident, too, that there were among the leaders of the crowd men who were perfectly acquainted with the structure of that mighty machine; for ponderous and terrible as it looks in action, it has its weak points, like the leviathan of the ocean or the monster of the forest, to those who understand its construction, its powers,

and its workings. Then, there might have been seen a short, broad-chested man, with amazing muscular development—his face covered with soot, as though he were fresh from his work, but perhaps for the purpose of concealment—standing next the engine, and bringing stroke after stroke on its more delicate joints with a heavy hammer, till the crash of bolt and hinge and lever resounded throughout the factory inclosure, and the sleeping monster was so far disabled that it could not without much repair be ever restored to its former self, and made competent to carry on its daily operations. A loud hurrah followed this achievement; and now, rushing inside the main building, many with the infatuation that actuated the owner of the goose with the golden eggs, began to smash the looms, and spindles, and machinery, before which probably they had themselves stood at their work. Next followed the cry for fire. A score of reckless lads ignited with their matches some waste cotton that was lying in an outhouse; and tossing it about in its blazing state, more perhaps from a vague love of mischief than from any positively evil design, they soon managed, intentionally or not, to set the building on fire in several parts. It was evident now, from the combustible character of the materials in the mill, that the flames would

soon increase into a general conflagration. What was to be done? The crowd saw at once the danger of remaining on the spot; perhaps they had not intended to endanger the building itself; at any rate, they left the premises without a moment's delay, but quietly; and then, dispersing in a thousand directions, they sought their homes or some place of concealment as noiselessly and secretly as possible. The factory yard, which had been crowded with human beings imagining and perpetrating mischief, was in a very few minutes empty, and without a sound, except from the crackling of the flame inside the building.

In five minutes after the factory yard was cleared of the mob, a large body of the police took possession of it; the few who had all the evening been stationed near Mount Pleasant, had been so much occupied with isolated brawls that they had not observed the detachment of the crowd which had marched under the shadows of the night towards Mr. Shorland's mill. The watchman, however, had brought them the information as quickly as his rheumatism would allow; messages had been sent to the various stations for reinforcements; so that very shortly a compact and well-organised staff of policemen were on the premises, strong enough to have repelled the attacks of any

undisciplined mob. And not long after, the fire brigade, which had received an immediate summons, came thundering up with all their paraphernalia of engines, hose, hatchets, and pickaxes. The flames had fastened on the lowest floor so fiercely, and were ascending so rapidly, that there seemed but little chance of saving any portion of the interior of that wing. The firemen, however, were undismayed; they exhibited their characteristic intrepidity and practical skill; water was at hand in plenty; the engines began to play; the streams were soon falling upon the roof and pouring into the burning rooms, hissing and burning into vapour in the fierce conflict with the devouring foe; firemen were seen mounted on their ladders, knocking holes through the walls where the hose-pipe might be advantageously directed, encountering the flames as they were bursting forth from the orifices, and walking on the slippery roofs with the precision of the feline tribe; so that by unparalleled exertions the conflagration was subdued in a few hours, having in its progress destroyed the interior of one wing of the building. As it threw its lurid glare over Mudlington, but few of the inhabitants came to witness it near at hand, some perhaps having no desire to join in its extinction, and the most being apprehensive,

lest, if present, they might be suspected of being accomplices in its origin.

On the morning after the Mudlingtonian riot, Frederick Shorland rose late. His head, as the old campaigner had predicted, was somewhat heavy, and his mental faculties were duller than usual; but in all material points he was restored to his ordinary state of health. There was, however, but little life in the family circle that morning, even after Jacob and his father had left for town. Mrs. and Miss Shorland were evidently depressed, and all Dolman's sallies were ineffectual in rousing them from their gloominess of spirit. He gave to the party a lively description of his previous evening's encounter, fighting his battles over again and thrice slaying the slain; only he was compelled to admit what his own dilapidated condition on his arrival at 'The Oaks' attested, that in the end he had been completely routed;—ignominiously so, he denied, for Turk Gregory, whoever he was, had never done such deeds in arms as he. Then, he had struggled and wrestled with the demons a second time in a nightmare: one woman of ponderous bulk had sat upon his chest like a foul goblin, whilst half-a-dozen others danced around him and shrieked out their weird incantations; in his fruitless endeavours to extrude the heavy female

carcase by pushing, kicking, and thumping, he had awoke. Henceforward, however willing he might be to do battle like a chivalrous knight in defence of the ladies, he declared his determination never again to measure his strength in antagonism with them, especially those of Mudlington.

Dolman, however, with all his raillery and banter, did not succeed in raising the spirits of the ladies. Mrs. Shorland had never, it is true, been one of the operative class; but she had passed her early years so little above them as to be cognizant of their virtues and failings, of their merits and defects; of the bright and the dark side of their character. Her parents had been shopkeepers in the midst of a manufacturing population, in which position the good and the bad qualities of the poor are conspicuously observed; and though she could not but remember that the conduct of many was marked by improvidence, extravagance and dishonesty, she did not forget that others had been just and upright in their dealings, patient under trials, and benevolent towards their neighbours in distress. On the whole, she had a kindly recollection of the class; and doubtless, in her now long career of affluence and comparative splendour, she had many times reflected with sympathy on the condition of

those who were rising early, and late taking rest, for the increase of her husband's already ample possessions, and would have been pleased if any opportunity had presented itself to her of doing them service. But situated as she was, residing some miles from Mudlington, and having but little communication with the district, no such occasion had offered itself to her; and perhaps she was now reproaching herself for an indifference to the wants of her less favoured fellow-creatures—an indifference which almost of necessity grows upon those who are at ease in their possessions, unless they resolutely shake it off. Might she not have aided in ameliorating the condition, at any rate, of her husband's operatives? Might she not have guided them by her counsel, relieved them in their distress, endeavoured to educate the ignorant and reform the misguided? She needed not here to have waited for opportunities; she ought at once to have put her hand to the nail and her right hand to the workman's hammer, and to have girt herself, not sought but seeking, for her appointed duty. Such thoughts possibly were passing through her mind, called up by the events of the previous night—events which seemed to prove clearly that the most powerful and wealthy in our land may deaden conscience to a sense

of moral responsibility, but that they will find themselves at length seated on a volcano as their throne, and be startled to reflection by the subterranean throes that presage coming danger.

Miss Shorland had gone early that morning into Mudlington and called upon the Maxwells, to thank them for their attention to her brother on the preceding evening. It was a long time since she had been in the district,—so long that she had forgotten its general characteristics. As she was now driven through the locality, she was humiliated at the wretched appearance of the place. She had never been there since she had arrived at maturity of thought and reflection ; and now, seeing it in its most unfavourable aspect, she was brought to the confession in her heart that much had been omitted which might have been done for the improvement of the inhabitants. Groups of women and young girls, in bed-gowns and with shawls thrown over their heads, were loitering at street corners, laughing wildly, at the same time that they carried on their countenances the stamp of destitution and hunger. Small bands of young lads and half-formed men were roaming about listlessly, but manifestly in a state of recklessness and desperation. Old men and women might be seen here and there,

evidently discussing their supposed wrongs with a savage earnestness, and probably expressing their satisfaction at the mischief that had been perpetrated on the previous night. She saw numbers gazing vacantly on the ruins of the factory; but on no single countenance did she trace the faintest sign of sympathy with the owner or of regret for the deed. After having despatched the business for which she came, she returned to 'The Oaks,' with a heavy heart, indeed, but wiser and better in spirit, inasmuch as she had been brought to reflect upon human responsibilities, and to ponder over the apostolic maxim, that 'none of us liveth to himself.'

Dolman, who soon saw that the ladies were ill at ease, no longer endeavoured to arouse them from their depression by allusion to the events of the previous evening. He shrewdly guessed that neither of them was well satisfied with the moral relationship in which the firm of Shorland and Son stood towards Mudlington; and he desisted accordingly from any allusion to the place or its inhabitants. He conversed with them in a sober and serious tone, which he was quite capable of doing when a fitting occasion required it. Indeed, without parading his thoughts, he had been himself impressed with the feeling that if the operatives of Mud-

lington were somewhat too impetuous, Messrs. Shorland and Son had set at nought their moral responsibility towards them, and regarded them simply as so many soulless machines which might conduce to the increase of their own wealth.

CHAPTER XV.

HEART-SEARCHINGS.

MONKHOUSE and Frederick Shorland were seated under the shadow of a wide-spreading beech-tree on the lawn. It was a beautiful summer's day—neither too hot nor too cool. The face of the landscape that stretched far away before them to the distant hills was bright and lovely—such as to excite a vague feeling of tranquil sympathy with all things living. It has been said that to gaze on the earth in her attractive aspects has a tendency to raise the mind from nature to nature's God. In a certain degree this may be true; but the effect is only produced through an emotional process of several links. There is an undefinable union between objective and subjective beauty, as though God's earth and man's heart were bound together by an electric chain, and the first influence of loveliness in external nature is to diffuse over the feelings a universal charity and benevolence towards all created things; and through this elimination of the grosser

sentiments, the soul ascends to the great and bountiful Creator. The conversation between the two young men might partly be influenced by the serenity that, pervading earth and sky, settled, in some measure, on their own hearts. It was as follows:—

Monkhouse.—‘ Really, Shorland, the scene of last night haunts me. I shall not for a long time get it out of my mind or sight. There is something awful in the recollection of those thousands of starving, infuriated, half-civilised beings, thirsting for revenge on their employers. There must be something wrong in such a condition of society as that.’

Shorland.—‘ Indeed, I must confess that, on a calm consideration of the events of last night, I do not by any means feel satisfied with the present state of Mudlington. There is evidently something wrong there, but where the blame lies I cannot say, and how to remedy the evil I cannot divine.’

Monkhouse.—‘ You seem to know but little more than myself of the working population, and so neither of us can be expected to analyse very minutely the root of the malady. The patient is evidently in bad health, mentally and bodily; he is tossing and flinging himself about like a madman, reckless of his own safety and dangerous to all around him; but upon the

cause of the disease we are not sufficiently informed to speculate, and still less can we devise a remedy for it. It is manifest, however, that such a state of things must be a cancer in the heart of society; and, without knowing where to apportion the blame, it is clear that blame lies at some one's door.'

Shorland.—'The facts are, as we heard last night, that the workpeople have turned out from dissatisfaction with their wages and the present management of the Mills. Are not the employers, think you, as likely to be correct in their estimate of right as the operatives?'

Monkhouse.—'I would give no opinion upon that; though you may be sure the person who wears the shoe can feel where it pinches better than the shoemaker who fits it on. Undoubtedly each side thinks itself right, and neither will yield till driven to it by necessity. But the most distressing element in the consideration is the low tone of civilisation among those people. I wonder the Manufacturers and Employers do not consider this, out of a regard for the very safety of themselves and of their property. Three or four hundred thousand workpeople — demoralised, uneducated, and without a spark of gratitude towards their employers, not deigning to notice them, if they meet them in the street, nay, frequently enter-

taining a strong feeling of hostility against them—these, scattered over no very wide area, might be a power dangerous to a state and of imminent peril to the capitalist. It seems to me that nothing but that incohesiveness which attends upon ignorance—that want of settled combination which follows out of stupidity—prevents such a body from being a most formidable antagonist to the government of a country and still more to the employer of labour. The maxim of Horace is true enough—“*Quid leges, sine moribus vanæ, proficiunt?*”

Shorland.—‘I do not doubt that great difficulties present themselves to those who attempt to remedy or remove these unquestionable evils. Still, I know not whether the shoulder has been fairly put to the wheel. I have sometimes heard my father and mother, with their friends, discussing such subjects; but I must confess that, little as I seriously reflected on these questions, I did not agree with my relatives and friends. Take, for instance, the town of Yarndale. At one extreme of society you find unbounded wealth, with its attendant luxuries; at the other, the lowest poverty, accompanied with the evils of ignorance, brutality, and degradation. Now, it seems to me that other maxims ought to influence the

behaviour of the employer in his dealings with his workpeople, over and above the severe axioms of trade. The responsibilities of wealth and education ought not to be thrust entirely out of consideration. How is it, after all that has been written and done on such matters, that the improvement in the social and moral condition of our manufacturing poor is so slow ?'

Monkhouse.—'I cannot be expected to give a positive answer to your question, having seen for the first time last evening a real, perhaps unfavourable, specimen of the class. I had expected certainly, from all the efforts that had been ostensibly made to elevate them, that more had been effected than there really has been. I suspect however, if the truth must be told, that many of our philanthropists are much fonder of making a parade on a platform than practically labouring out a scheme in daily action—of writing a pamphlet than of living it—of seeing their names in a newspaper than being seen in a poor man's cottage. A vast number of what Hamlet calls "words, words, words," have been sent on their mission through the country; but they have been in a great degree profitless, having died away with their echoes without any corresponding action. It is no difficult matter for a man to make a

speech who has a fair intellect and modest assurance; there is no martyrdom, or even self-denial, in a person with ten thousand a year giving a hundred pounds for a church or a school. But it is by no means so agreeable for a capitalist who loves his ease to carry on the slow process of superintending, however remotely, the social interests and moral welfare of his workpeople. Now, it stands to reason that, in all efforts to improve the intellectual and moral condition of the poor, theories can do nothing, and laws but comparatively little; if any marked change is to be wrought, it can only be by personal contact with the working classes of a neighbourhood; by private intercourse with them, by a generous sympathy with them on the part of the employers; by an unobtrusive care for them in their difficulties and aberrations; by individual but unostentatious watchfulness over their interests and for their good; and not by making a platform speech to-day which will be forgotten to-morrow, or by giving a fifty-pound note to a benevolent object—a sum too insignificant to be regarded—or by writing a pamphlet which may form the staple of a leading article in the ‘Times’ one week, and sink into oblivion the next.’

The conversation ceased for a time, each

seemingly satisfied to pursue the train of thought that was passing through his mind without giving it utterance. Indeed, it is often from this deep well-spring of meditation, gushing forth pure and unruffled, undisturbed by the breath of words, that the highest aspirations ascend, the purest purposes flow, and the greatest actions are achieved. After the lapse of a few minutes the conversation was renewed.

Monkhouse.—‘I think, Shorland—and I must speak candidly—that there is upon your father and brother a responsibility unfulfilled in regard to that district of Mudlington. Whatever be the cause of its debased and uncivilised condition—whatever be the best means of elevating its inhabitants in the social scale—it is palpable that not the slightest effort has been made to improve it. The present is its normal state; and as it has been thus, time out of mind, so may it continue for aught any one cares. Many manufacturing populations doubtless are far superior to that of Mudlington, intellectually and morally. Why, then, should it be allowed to continue in its low estate without some effort to raise it? Now, I have just been thinking that I should like to make Mudlington my first Curacy, if you would obtain the control of your works in that locality. I

have determined to enter into Holy Orders, and you know it is better to spend your youth among discouragements and grow old in comforts, than to strike out for yourself too easy a career at the beginning. If I were to vegetate on my Fellowship, and become Tutor, and fill easy offices in College, I should get rusty in everything but Greek and Latin. I fear that the study of Aristotle and Plato, of metaphysics and ancient history, if pursued uninterruptedly too long, would reduce me into the mould of a schoolman, and incapacitate me for those practical duties of every-day life wherein consists a man's real usefulness in his generation, and without which no one can duly fulfil the objects of his being.'

Shorland.—'You are not in earnest, surely?'

Monkhouse.—'Why not? Is there anything so unreasonable in what I say?'

Shorland.—'Certainly, there is something out of all reason in your proposition. I do not mean so far as I am concerned; for I have been thinking myself that my father and brother must have been neglectful of the moral condition of Mudlington, and I have been revolving in my mind how far I could repair their omission. There have been, without doubt, many employers there besides our firm guilty of a similar indifference; but a dozen

wrongs will not make one right: some one must begin the effort, and I feel inclined myself to be that one, even though I had no friendly salutation from the people there last evening. I shall have to go into business, I am quite sure; my father, I fear, would be incessantly grumbling, if I were a Curate on eighty pounds a year, or an incipient barrister on nothing, in either case dependent on him for income; and Jacob would be regarding the annual payment as an enduring judgment on the firm of Shorland and Son, quoting sundry passages of Scripture thereon. Besides, it is time to lay aside our Oxford pranks, and face the world; and I imagine I can be as useful in my generation when engaged in trade as in any other sphere. Neither do I think an Oxford training will incapacitate a man for business; I believe it will enlarge his mind, so that he will be brought to look upon every transaction with the eye of a gentleman as well as of a trader, and to regard his poorer fellow-men rather as moral beings than as moving automatons. All this is reasonable enough so far as I am concerned; but the idea of your taking upon yourself the Curacy of Mudlington is amusing enough.'

Monkhouse.—'You talk bravely of your own purposes; but why are you diverted at the

thought of my being preferred to the Curacy of Mudlington ?'

Shorland.—' You must surely be aware, if you reflect, how totally unfit you are, from all your antecedents, for such a post. You have been brought up amidst all the refinements of social life ; your mind has been highly cultivated in literature, science, and the ancient classics ; your life has been one of deep study and hidden thought ; your feelings are sensitive and delicate. Why, your habits and pursuits hitherto have been the worst possible preparation for the rough contact with the world which would be your lot as Curate of Mudlington. Some men are pretty well cut out for such a position, from their thick skins, rough natures, torpid sensibilities, and general acquaintance with the habits of the manufacturing poor ; but with yourself there would be no aptitude whatever—nay, a positive unfitness. I am confident you can have no conception from your past life of the sharp usage, the rubs and scrubs, you would have to endure from almost all quarters. Nay, from what I can fancy of such a position, the very kindness of many around you would often be exhibited in such a way as to jar gratefully on your sensibilities ; and if so, you may imagine that the hostility of others, and these you must

in some degree be prepared to encounter, would be such as to inflict on you intense pain. You, who have never been in a poor man's dwelling—except it may be a cottager's in your native county—have you considered what it would be to spend some hours each day in unwholesome, noisome rooms, holding communication with a class with whom you have neither thought nor feeling in common—nay, a class who would have great difficulty even in comprehending your southern mode of pronunciation?’

Here Miss Shorland and Dolman came up from the house, and the dialogue ceased.

CHAPTER XVI.

*UNATTRACTIVE, AS A SPHERE OF
CLERICAL DUTY.*

IT is now that dreary period of the year when autumn and winter seem to be striving for the mastery. In the country October often closes amidst smiles of sunshine, as though the two seasons were taking a friendly embrace before the one sinks to its repose and the other advances on its journey. The hoar-frost of the morning melts gracefully before the beams of day-dawn, and the light illuminates the golden leaves that are quivering before the gentle breeze and are ready to lose their hold on their parent branch. There is something exhilarating in the cool air tempered by the sunshine, and your step is elastic as you tread the crisp dry ground. You may entertain some lingering regrets for the summer and autumn; you may remember with pleasure your foreign tour or sea-side residence but lately ended; you may watch the receding glories of the season with an Ossianic 'joy of grief'; but you are never-

theless ready to welcome in its order the approach of winter, and to accommodate yourself to its presence with its long evenings, its bright fires, its Christmas cheer, its chill north winds, its vegetative torpor, and its white winding-sheet of frost and snow.

It is not so, however, in a town like Yarn-dale, and especially in a locality like Mudlington. Occasional fine days there must be doubtless in such a place, but the weather in its general type is there of a depressing character. The atmosphere is heavy at that period of the year; the smoke struggles upwards with difficulty; the tall chimnies seem to emit a denser reek than usual, and the blacks are scattered around in greater profusion. Probably a drizzling rain is falling, a compound of soot and water which darkens rather than cleanses the face on which it alights. The streets are muddy, and the parapets greasy; the streams roll down in a more than ordinarily dull and discoloured fashion, putting forth an unpleasant odour, as their chemical deposits are stirred up from the mud and held in solution. Those goslings, naturally white and downy, are now dressed in feathers of a dirty, neutral tint. The human beings you meet, with the exception of a half-boozy fellow here and there, seem to be oppressed with the weight of some hidden care. The man

whose spirits rise and fall with the mercury, will infallibly be in danger at such a season of betaking himself either to strong drink or to prussic acid.

It was in such weather, about the last week in October, that Monkhouse came down to Mudlington, Yarndale, to enter on his duties as *quasi* Incumbent of that delightful locality. His feelings doubtless were of a conflicting kind, as he first set foot in the neighbourhood, in the character of a resident. It is impossible to conceive that the recollection of Oxford and of his own home did not spring up in his mind, accompanied by emotions of longing and regret, as he stood alone and unknown, on a spot destitute of every extrinsic attraction, and at a season when the elements seemed to combine to oppress the spirits. But whatever were his feelings, he suppressed them; and if a shadow of gloom swept across his hopes and aspirations, he never for a moment faltered in his purpose, but resolved to grapple with his future in a dauntless spirit.

‘There is nothing to exhilarate, certainly, in what I see around me,’ reasoned Monkhouse with himself, as he was taking a slow tour of inspection through some of the Mudlington streets; ‘inanimate nature does not look cheering; but let me have some communication

with the human species, and I may extract something of the beautiful out of the inhabitants.'

At this moment a half-tipsy artisan, who was maundering about some subject which he had been discussing in a beer-shop, and, not looking before him, came against Monkhouse with a startling shock.

'Did no' see yo', maester,' said the man, and then added half-jestingly, as if his discussion was yet working in his mind, 'Con yo' tell me if this here is the way to Callyforny?'

'Not exactly,' said Monkhouse, 'if you expect to get gold there. But I must keep my eyes open here, I perceive,' he continued to reason with himself, 'or these Callyforny seekers will run me down. Let me, however, try a little rational conversation with some intelligent-looking human being, and I shall come to a better judgment of the place.' So reflecting, he went up to a stall on which oranges, nuts, toffy, and such attractions were arranged near a shop-door; and, adopting his most insinuating manner, entered into colloquy with the man who presided over the fruits and confectionery. A cluster of idle persons soon gathered round Monkhouse as he was making a bargain, to have a look at him, as he was a stranger and unknown, and to see whether he were not a Frenchman who had rambled there by mistake.

‘Eh!’ said one lad, ‘hear how he talks! he splits his words like parched peys (peas), and he minces like a foruner.’

‘Nay, lad,’ observed another, ‘he’s Irish,—as Irish as the pigs in Swill-hill Market.’

Monkhouse bought his three-penny-worth of oranges, and paid for them with thanks.

‘Well,’ said the shopkeeper to a bystander, as he left, ‘that chap, whoever he is, maun be a softie—a gradely softie. May-be, he’s fro’ parts a long way off by his talk; but he’s nobbut a goosie, wherever he comes fro’. Why, he clod deawn th’ brass, and said “Thonk ye.”’ If you pay the money, the man thought, have you any need to say ‘Thonk ye?’ His law was to be just and equal; his rule of life was, ‘an eye for an eye.’ ‘To say “Thonk ye!”—he maun be a gradely softie.’

‘Come along, my lad, with me,’ said Monkhouse to one of the listening boys, ‘and show me the neighbourhood; you look an intelligent little fellow; and I will pay you as my guide.’

The two went on their way; but there opened out no bright vista to Monkhouse’s eye. They came up to a couple of miners who were engaged in an up-and-down encounter; one had got the other on the ground, and was treating him to sundry visitations with his boot. Monkhouse, who did not want spirit, went up to the

man who was on his legs, and told him to let the other get up. 'Thou foo',' said the fellow, 'if thou'd had sich a fash in getting him deawn, thou would no' be so ready in letting him get up again.'

There is a ferocity, but after all something of human nature, in this mode of reasoning. Even when nations fight, if one gets the other down, it is not so willing to let its adversary get up again.

'They're great brutes,' said Monkhouse.

'Oh,' said the lad, 'it's nowt but a bit on a feight.'

'Who is this that is coming up?' inquired Monkhouse; 'I don't think he's a tee-totaller.'

'No, for sure. It's Si (Josiah) Jukes; he'd a fortin left him last year, and he's drunk it away in twelve months.'

'Aye, and he's dry yet,' the man said, coolly, as he passed them, having heard the remark.

'But come along,' said the lad; 'there's a chap here as'll tell you everything, for he knows everything. His name is Misac Rollison (Rowlandson). He's the cleverest tyke in Mudlington, and he can make long speeches—an hour 'bout stopping. It's as good as a play to hear him.'

'Good day to you,' said Monkhouse to him; 'I hope you are well, and that trade is going on briskly.'

‘Pretty well, pretty well; but we must have trade as free as the air we breathe—we must have the privileges of Englishmen as unfettered as the light of the sun—before real prosperity can shine upon us.’

‘But you have not so much to find fault with as you had. Englishmen, I think, are pretty well off by comparison with the inhabitants of other countries; we are tolerably free as times go.’

‘Free, sir; had you ever a strait-waistcoat on? You’d find the difference between working in one and in your shirt sleeves. Were you ever in the village stocks? You’d find them an impediment to your locomotion. Had you ever irons on your legs? You could not well try a “spin” in a foot-race with them on.’

‘I never wore those anklets, Mr. Rowlandson; I should not like, either, to try the experiment.’

‘Very likely; but I have. I was once hauled off to London double-ironed.’

‘What had been the row?’

‘You’ve heard of Henry Hunt, sir? Hah! he was a fine-looking fellow, was Hunt, and a capital speaker to a crowd. Perhaps we thought too much of him; but he was a dashing chap, when all is said and done. Did you ever hear of Peterloo?’

‘Yes, of course.’

‘Then I was a sort of leader in the Reform party; we had done no wrong, sir, and we were treated shamefully by those Yeomanry beggars, most of whom were half-tipsy. Anyhow, some of us were sent to one prison, some to another. I was transported in iron to London; and when I was let out of gaol, had to beg my way home.’

‘Now, now, Misac,’ said an elderly woman in a shrill tone, ‘thou wilt be talking thy politics still; they’ve never done thee any good sin’ thou wert born; and, after all, thou’r drawn into ’em like a blue-bottle into the low (flame) of a candle. I wish thou would look after thy own business, and leave other folk to mind theirs. Owder and madder, sir, owder and madder, when chaps are bitten wi’ politics.’

‘You see,’ said Misac, waving his hand patronisingly, ‘you see how it is with these women. Liberty of the subject they care nothing about; but they’re precious fond of having liberty enough for themselves.’

Monkhouse and his guide paced on, in observant and meditative mood. ‘Who is that you spoke to?’ asked Monkhouse of the lad; ‘he seemed to be lame and stooping from illness.’

‘He’s my fayther.’

‘What’s the matter with him?’

‘Oh,’ the lad laughed, and said, ‘it comes o’

one of these drinking bouts as dunderyeads have; they drink their senses away, and when they're sober they wonder what fools they've been.'

'How was it?'

'Why, it was i' this how. Fayther, Tim Noddles, and Joel Kibblethat (Kibblethwaite) was a drinking at the "Rising Sun," and they o' geet drunk together,—as drunk as pash.'

'The "Rising Sun" had been shining then.'

'Aye for sure had it,' replied the lad, laughing. 'Well, fayther drunk and drunk, till, he said, he felt as if there was a nest o' cats and kitlings in his inside, and he could drink no more. Tim Noddles supped three or four times at a dry glass, and wanted another. But, after a bit, they geet up to go awhom (home), and they linked arm in arm. On they went powlering away, one keeping another up. Isn't it queer that them drunken chaps never geet out of plumb in the same way at the same time, but if one jogs in one way another jogs in another way. At last, one of 'em gave a slip, and down they o' coom, like a barrowful o' bricks, one atop of another. And then there was such a scutter and scramble in the lane. Tim Noddles rolled ower fayther, and Joel Kibblethat rolled ower Tim Noddles; and fayther rolled ower Tim Noddles and Joel Kibblethat; and that went

on till they contrived to geet up. Folk say, the devil lays a feather-bed for a drunken mon; but he hadn't done so there. Fayther says his inside is badly yet, and he conno' stand straight, nor stretch hissel' out; and old women, who are skilfu' in such things, say he never will be able, for he's brokken the mainspring of his back,"—and the lad shrieked with laughter, as though the snapping of that useful part in animal mechanics was a very amusing incident in life.

'Here, my boy, take this shilling; I can now find my way very well. Thank you for your information.'

CHAPTER XVII.

*NASCENT HOPES AND UNDEVELOPED
SCHEMES.*

THE conversation between Monkhouse and Frederick Shorland, as detailed in a former chapter, had not died away and passed into oblivion. Springing, as it did, out of circumstances that were fresh in the memory, it might have been supposed that when their vividness had faded, the resolutions founded on them would have also vanished. But such had not been the case. Monkhouse carried a strong will under a calm surface, and whatever he had set himself to do hitherto, he had done with a cool head and a steady aim. Both at school and at college he had exhibited a quiet tenacity of purpose; and, having once set an object before him, he had pursued it with determination and perseverance. Frederick Shorland till lately had shown but little energy of will and definiteness of aim; at College he had passed his time gaily and lightly among his friends, a pleasant companion and untroubled by serious reflections; he might all along have had a dormant

inflexibility of disposition under an exterior of levity, but he had never placed before himself an end worthy of his attainment, nor made a genuine trial of his mental resources and moral stability. Both the young men have now an object before them, demanding all their caution, energy, and firmness,—an object in the pursuit of which success is by no means sure; but where hope is an incentive, charity an impelling principle, and failure is no discredit.

Monkhouse was now the Rev. Charles Monkhouse, though he had not yet been licensed to the parochial duties of Mudlington. He had been ordained on his fellowship a month or two before his arrival at Yarndale. The district of Mudlington had been cut off from the parish of which it was a part, and formed into a separate ecclesiastical charge. An advertisement had been inserted in the ecclesiastical newspapers by the Incumbent of the parish, to this effect:—
'Wanted, as a Curate for Mudlington, Yarndale (sole charge), a man of sincere personal piety, of great religious zeal, of enlarged knowledge, of considerable learning, and indefatigable energy. He must be a good preacher; he must be well fitted to deliver Cottage Lectures; he must take a pleasure in visiting from house to house; and he must be very attentive to the sick. A clergyman from Oxford or

Cambridge, with the above requisites, would have the preference. Stipend, first year, 80*l*.' 'Bless me!' thought Monkhouse, 'what a load of good qualities is required for 80*l*. a year! They must be cheap commodities in the Yarndale market. I am quite sure I have not the half of them, and I think you might look some time before you found such a specimen of perfection.' But after this obstacle had been surmounted, another, perhaps more formidable, presented itself. The stipend was to be provided, for the present, by one of the Societies for supplying additional curates; and he had to satisfy the Committee of the Association on his spiritual fitness for the duty. His ministerial credentials were of course formally correct; but the Secretary insisted on some evidence that the applicant was actuated by a spirit of vital religion before the grant could be sanctioned. Monkhouse was somewhat posed by the demand. 'How,' he reasoned, 'is a man to afford demonstrative proof of his experimental religion? How can I procure a witness to vouch for that which he has not seen? Am I to pass through a catechism of feeling for the assurance of a Committee? It would be easy to adopt a formula of expression that might serve the purpose; but if the fact of voluntarily assuming such an uninviting duty does not

prove or imply inward vitality, no shibboleth of party would !' Besides, Monkhouse was scarcely the man to lay bare to the profane gaze the inner shrine of feeling. Many, no doubt, take a pride in such revelations, and recount sensations or presumed sensations as lightly as they would go through a sum in arithmetic; but to him such a course would have savoured of sacrilege. When the emotions, however sincere, are somewhat coarse and general, their exposure involves no timidity or shrinking; but when there are inquisitiveness of thought, individuality of perception, and chasteness of feeling, the unnecessary revelation of this inner life would be like tearing the covering from all that was sacred, and laying bare to the sight of the vulgar crowd the seat of Deity itself. At length, however, the difficulty was overcome, and this vigilance of the Committee, which in many cases is very properly exercised, was satisfied by a plain statement of facts.

Meanwhile, Frederick Shorland had not been forgetful of his purpose. His mother and sister had been anxious that he should either enter into Holy Orders, or become a member of the Bar. It seemed to them to be a matter of regret that his course at College should be unproductive of any result, and that he should adopt a line of business for which his previous pursuits

and education might incapacitate rather than prepare him. It is not unlikely, also, that they wished for some other element besides the commercial in the family. From day to day the subjects of conversation at 'The Oaks' were the state of the market, the rate of discount, the price of twills, domestics and long-cloths, and such-like passing relics of the warehouse and reminiscences of the Exchange, which were engaging enough to those who had tens of thousands involved in them, but very uninteresting to feminine ears. Fully acknowledging their obligation to the pursuits of commerce, they were nevertheless anxious to engraft upon the family stock some profession, which, though comparatively unremunerative, might rise above the absorbing avocations of buying and selling. Miss Shorland's tastes especially were intellectual and philanthropic, and, undeveloped in some degree though they were, they were struggling to disengage themselves from selfish interests and idle frivolity, and to concentrate into a desire after practical usefulness in life. Mrs. and Miss Shorland, consequently, felt a natural regret at Frederick's decision; but, on an explanation of his motives, they acquiesced in its propriety. Jacob vehemently opposed his brother's purpose. He had a strong objection to his joining the firm of Messrs. Shorland

and Son. He was quite willing that he should take a curacy, and, in addition to his stipend, have an allowance of a hundred pounds a year from the warehouse—which sum, he guessed, would be set off against him in his father's will; but that he should become a partner in the business and have any share in its profits, was a project most obnoxious to him. He had no objection that his brother should be a luminary of the Church or a distinguished member of the Bar; he cared, indeed, very little what he was; only he could not bear the idea that he should stand on the same commercial footing as himself, and by partaking in the returns of trade diminish his own portion of them. Mr. Shorland, Sen., readily acquiesced in his son's scheme. He could see no reason why these young men should be so anxious to enter into clerical orders, and starve. Livings! Starvations, he thought, would be the proper name. In his opinion there was a silly and unnecessary demand throughout the country for more clergymen. Had they not done very well in his younger days without all this outcry for more parsons? and had not far larger fortunes been made then than of late years? This fuss about education and religion for the working-classes was all humbug; the subject served spouters to talk about; but it would be well if

such people would learn to mind their own business. His experience told him that these Mechanics' Institutions and such like prating-shops only tended to make working-people discontented with their position in life, and to fit them for leaders in unions and at turn-outs. He was not sorry, therefore, that Frederick should enter upon the pursuits of commerce—the noblest occupation that man could adopt, as well as the most lucrative. Besides, his son was anxious to take up that department of his business which was most unpleasant to him. His mills and workpeople had latterly been a sore trouble to him; and Frederick was entering into an arrangement to have the control of this portion of his manifold undertakings. Only he feared that his son's education might prove a great disadvantage in his commercial career. Why, neither he nor his young friends knew how to work a sum in Practice, with all their College learning; one of them was not sure what the term Consols meant, at the same time that he held stock in them; and as for Frederick, he greatly doubted whether he knew the difference between a t-cloth and a long-cloth—between a mule and a spindle. Still, the young man, if apt, might learn. At any rate, it was better for him to be superintending these mills at Mudlington, than to be losing his time

in marrying young simpletons, christening dirty-faced babies, and churching breeding women; and hectoring, as these puppy parson-lads do, over living congregations and dead bodies in their coffins. He, therefore, approved on the whole of his son's resolution; he advised him at once to lay aside his Latin and Greek—to sweep them out of his mind like dusty cobwebs—and to apply himself diligently to his Ready Reckoner and Merchant's Vade-mecum; and he charged him never again to neglect his balance-sheet, but to study his ledger and the price of cotton, and to imitate his brother Jacob as the embodiment of all the cardinal virtues.

Frederick Shorland alone would have been scarcely the person into whose hands his father would have entrusted the Mudlington factories. Graham was, therefore, associated with him, as a junior partner and a joint manager. It is not unusual for a merchant whose commercial transactions are as extensive and diversified as those of Mr. Shorland, to take into business with him limited partners, whose responsibility does not extend beyond their respective departments in trade. Nor is it to be supposed that because a young man becomes connected as a principal with an old and important establishment, that his fortune is already made. He is

so placed probably as to be able, by perseverance, frugality, and attention, to advance his own interests ; but his wealth is yet to be accumulated. The whole of the capital in the business belongs to the senior partners, and a high rate of interest is to be paid to them for its use, before a single sixpence is divided to the hard-working juniors, who have to watch and promote the interests of the concern day by day ; and even then perhaps the lion's share of the profits comes to the moneyed members of the firm. It is only when the young partner manages to save, and to add to the business capital, that he begins to get a firm hold upon the substantial products of commerce. Nor is there anything wrong in this system ; it is both legitimate and beneficial. It tends to make the rising tradesman frugal and active ; it reminds him that he has to advance his position, as his seniors had done before him ; and it warns him that if he does not, it must be from his own carelessness and imprudence. Occasionally young partners, like young colts, begin to kick ; but if they go on with such pranks, they inevitably kick themselves out of harness, and soon find themselves turned out to grass on a bare pasture. Fortunes, therefore, are not so easily accumulated even in a place like Yarnsdale as some may imagine. Good people who reside where money circulates

sluggishly, and who live in ease and leisure upon their income—*procul negotiis, ut prisca gens mortalium*—are accustomed from a distance to regard such a town as Yarndale as a California, into which a man has only to dig his pick-axe and he will bring up nuggets of gold; but a person so reasoning, and acting upon his opinion, may chance to find himself deceived. The ground must be turned up, it is true; but, as a rule, it is only by patient, careful, toilsome digging, that the gold can be brought to the surface, especially by the young workman.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FERTILITY OUT OF SEEMING DISSOLUTION.

THE arrangement whereby Graham was taken into a junior partnership in the Mudlington Mills, was in every respect a judicious one. Mr. Shorland, sen., had a favourable opinion of him, it is true; 'a very attentive and trustworthy young man,' he would say, 'only a little biassed in favour of the hands;' but that would not have carried the old gentleman one step beyond the circle of his own interests. He saw, however, that Graham had become so thoroughly acquainted, financially and practically, with the nature of cotton manufacture, and so skilful in his dealings with the operatives, that his loss would have been irreparable. He wisely, therefore, determined to associate him with his son, trusting, in the instincts of nature, that his faculties and powers would be still more strenuously exercised when he felt that he had a personal interest in the success of the business. Frederick Shorland, too, was well pleased with the arrangement, as he was

likely to find in him a willing and able coadjutor in all his projects. Graham, being one of the working-class himself, was necessarily acquainted with their habits and condition in every particular; neither, after rising above them by his own faithfulness, study, and intelligence, was he inclined to forget, as is too often the case, that he had higher responsibilities in reference to them than those simply of an employer of their labour. He himself also was greatly benefited by his change of position. His prospects were now very good; and, humanly speaking, he was so placed as to be able to rise in the commercial world himself, and at the same time to assist those who were beneath him in the social scale.

The state of Mudlington about midsummer, as we saw, was one of turbulence and riot. This continued for several weeks. The differences that give rise to, as well as spring out of, strikes, are not easily arranged, and the asperities connected with them seethe a long time. There is such a general spirit, too, of mutual sympathy among the operative class, that large sums of money are easily collected from them, or are advanced by the unions, for the support of their fellows who are supposed to be ill treated. However much these turn-outs and lock-outs are to be deplored,

it is to be feared that from time to time they will spring up among us like epidemics or intermittent fevers. The science of political economy, we are told, is indisputable in its truth, and affords well-defined rules for the trader; and, wherever we witness a strike, we only see, too, classes grounding their opposition to each other on the dictum of Adam Smith, that the essence of barter consists in buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market. Not that these conflicts between capital and labour are unmixed evils. As both sides are sufferers from them in a greater or less degree, so neither is willing lightly to enter into them; and thus practical justice is often the result of self-interest, when it could not have been pressed out of a sense of duty. In this particular instance, the strike took an unfavourable turn for the workpeople. As a rule, the operatives know very well that it is only by peaceful, passive resistance that they have any chance of success—that any infraction of the law must be their undoing. Here they had broken bounds. By the riot and destruction of property that had ensued, the energy and power of the leaders were paralysed. Several of them were seized, and examined before the magistrates on the charge of inciting the people to break the law. Some of the crowd also were

brought before the Bench. But, as it appeared that neither Charnock nor any of the speakers had urged the mob to break the law—indeed, had rather cautioned them against it—they were not committed to take their trial. In the case of the rest the testimony was not sufficiently clear to establish their connection with the riot. Indeed, it was with great difficulty that any evidence at all could be produced, and even that was unwillingly given. There could be no doubt but that the mechanic who broke up the steam-engine was well known, and a man was arrested on the charge; but no one would swear to his identity. The police courts were crowded with the companions and well-wishers of the presumed culprits, who did not hesitate to manifest their feelings throughout; thus making it tolerably clear that, if unfavourable evidence was given, it must be at the witness's own peril. Still these judicial investigations, ineffectual though they were in proving guilt, neutralised the influence of the leaders, and thus curtailed the supplies which are ordinarily collected for the support of the unemployed. Besides, the turn-out was now in a great degree without an object. One of the mills was in such a dilapidated condition that for some months it could not be re-opened for the employment of operatives at all. Thus, by degrees the organi-

sation broke up, and the hands severally began to seek work elsewhere.

It might be supposed, perhaps, that these incidents would have entailed heavy loss on the firm of Messrs. Shorland. This, however, was not the case. Indeed, they had in the end the contrary effect. They doubtless imposed much that was disagreeable and annoying upon the owners of the mills, for no one likes to be made the subject of filthy songs and the object of every species of reviling; but in a pecuniary sense the result was very beneficial to them. They were amply compensated for the loss sustained, from insurance offices and county rates; and they had the opportunity of laying out the money thus obtained most advantageously for their future interests. At this time Frederick Shorland and Graham became controllers of the factories, and they at once made the most of their position. The mill that had suffered so much damage was old and inconvenient; from its structure there was necessarily a great loss of steam-power; most of the modern facilities for carrying on the work were wanting; the machinery, too, was out of date—a most fatal defect where competition is so close; the various rooms also were ill-ventilated and necessarily unhealthy. Mr. Shorland, with that perversity which almost invariably in-

capacitates old men from being active, vigorous tradesmen, had neglected to keep pace with the times, so far as related to the improvement of that particular mill, alleging that it had all along worked well, nor did he see why it should not continue to do so. Now, it was this defective and ill-regulated state of the factory, combined with oppression in the management, which had provoked the operatives, and caused the attack on the building; and thus, what at first sight seemed an act of wanton damage and destruction, calculated only to produce loss to the owner and starvation to the workman, had the effect ultimately of bringing good out of evil, as life germinates out of corruption and decay.

The circumstances, therefore, that seemed at one time so inauspicious, proved fortunate in the end. In the rebuilding of one portion of the mill and the repairing of the rest, Frederick Shorland exercised great judgment, placing himself in experienced hands, and adopting every recent improvement both in the style of building and in mechanical inventions. Graham had been intimately acquainted with the defects of the old structure and machinery, and he was of course the practical director in the alterations that were introduced. In the other factory, also, the machinery had been falling in some

degree behind the times ; and here the partners seized the opportunity of the turn-out for re-fitting and repairing what was old, and adding the newest and the most useful contrivances. Neither was Graham inattentive to the engagement of the operatives. He knew that the character of their former work-people had been on the whole below the average ; for defective mills and machinery necessarily gather to them an inferior style of hands. Consequently, filling up each of the factories by degrees, he selected those who were respectable in their demeanour and apt at their work. Above all, he was careful in the selection of his managers and overlookers, upon whom greatly depends the moral condition of a mill.

In the management of our factories, there has been without question a great improvement during the last quarter of a century ; and yet it is equally manifest that there is still room enough for more. And in nothing is this defective control more palpable than in the choice of overlookers. As a class they are by no means an unexceptionable body ; and yet their influence for good or evil is very great—for evil it is almost unlimited. An overlooker is placed over some fifty or a hundred females ; his power over them is all but uncontrolled. Now, that man may either be a brute, exercising in his

department a fiercer tyranny than any despot, using obscene language and profane oaths in his ordinary talk, corrupting by personal seduction the morals of the young women ; or he may be a person of virtuous habits and a religious tone of mind, conscious of his responsibility both towards his master and the females under him, suppressing among them all tendency to impropriety, and endeavouring to direct them in a course of prudence, respectability and decorum. It requires no deep insight into human nature to predict how widely different would be the effect produced by these two persons. And yet it is undeniable that a class of overlookers, by no means small, are men of low and brutal character, sufficiently strict in getting off work, because that is for their own interest, but morally depraved, and exercising a most baneful influence on those beneath them.

Among popular errors there is none more gross than that which makes our Church alone responsible for the moral condition of our people. Doubtless it is one agency in the promotion of social improvement ; but let no one suppose that its influence, unsupported, can elevate, to the extent we would desire to see, the moral status of our manufacturing populations. Where are the clergy ? is the cant inquiry, when our lower orders turn restive and begin

to kick at their betters. And whence does the question come? Probably from one who has allowed his managers and overlookers to demoralise his operatives, and, so long as the balance-sheet stood well, has been entirely indifferent to the well-being of those in his employ. The rays of practical enlightenment must radiate from many centres, each expanding and enlarging like the concentric ripples on the water, till they unite into one broad circumference of moral and social sunshine. As a rule, civilisation and morality descend in the scale of society, and a class is affected for good or evil by the class immediately above it. It has been found to be so in the history of nations; it is so now; and it will ever be so in a greater or less degree. If the lowest dregs of society are to be purified, it will be effected primarily through the cleansing of the impurities in the class immediately above them. And what is true as a general principle, is especially so in the arrangement and management of a factory. The heads must be men of considerate temper, undeviating truth, strict honour, and inflexible justice; they must be sensible of their solemn responsibility towards those in their employ; and in the appointment of all in authority under them they must keep in mind that responsibility. Thus, the managers and

overlookers will combine with them in their benevolent designs, and, by encouraging what is good and controlling what is bad, tend to raise the characters of those under them. And the operatives themselves soon learn to appreciate these principles of conduct; they observe them in action, exercising a quiet gradual influence, and their own tone of thought becomes imperceptibly assimilated with that of those above them. It is not by many religious professions or a canting phraseology—it is not by taking up some crotchet and becoming its missionary—that a real, sound, healthy effect is to be produced; but by acting in the spirit of a Christian gentleman—one who lets his conduct be the visible testimony to his sense of duty. How marvellously does such a high tone of feeling and action work downwards in our public schools, and in a like manner will it in our factories! Illustrations of such careful and Christian management as this are by no means singular; and wherever they are found, they must not simply produce the happiest results on those who from their dependent position claim the warmest sympathy of the employer, but they must react most beneficially even on his temporal interests. ‘There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.’

CHAPTER XIX.

A NEW SPHERE OF DUTY.

HOWEVER nebulous may be the philosophy of Mr. Thomas Carlyle as a whole, one of his dogmas is ever looming with distinctness out of his mist of language—namely, that man is born to work. The counter theory seems to gain greater favour in the present day—that man is born to talk. The faculty of working belongs to many orders of creation—that of talking to man only; and thus, the *cacoethes loquendi*, being peculiarly the *æstrum humanum*, is naturally a more powerful impulse than the *cacoethes agendi*. Who can measure the infinity of words that are every year sent forth through the universe, upon every variety of subject and in support of every possible and impossible project; and who without a microscopic penetration can discern the infinitesimally small amount of work that follows? The sack in abundance, the bread insignificant! The world might be one huge wind-bag. Happy is it for men who wish to live in peace, that the words die away

for ever, and their echoes are heard no more! If they ever started again fresh into life, like the frozen bugle notes of Baron Munchausen, who could rest quietly in his bed as the millions of congealed utterances that have been sent on their mission through the wide world melted into articulate sounds and ejaculated round our ears, affrighting us at noonday and startling the deep silence of midnight? O ye preachers and teachers, clerics and laymen, who hold forth by the hour inside your consecrated buildings and out of doors at market-crosses, in churches and conventicles, in pulpits and on tubs, men of brazen throats and leathern lungs!—O ye men of the nimble tongue who measure sentences by the tones of Big Ben in our two Houses of Parliament!—O ye members of Borough Corporations, Mayors, Aldermen, Common Councillors, Town Clerks, who rejoice in bombazine gowns and eloquence over ashpits!—O ye projectors of schemes for the regeneration of the human race, inventors of wondrous panaceas for moral evil, efficacious as Cockle's pills for physical ailments!—O ye of the delicate and darling sex, Duchesses, Countesses, Squires, down to the vulgar species woman,—if the genus "woman" has not gone out bodily in this age of "ladies,"—who ventilate your imaginations and cambric

handkerchiefs in the promulgation of airy nothings, enunciating Utopianism and awaiting the millenium,—patronesses of Almacks and of benevolent schemes, the vitalising spirits of balls and bazaars, skilful and energetic in the polka,—one and all, my masters and mistresses, sneer not at the rule of life laid down by Carlyle, in this particular at any rate;—talk somewhat less, and do somewhat more. Come here, you lazy, chattering ape: help that old woman to raise her fruit-basket on to her head, and you will have done a deed more benevolent, if not more popular, than if you spent an hour in wasting useful breath by propounding useless theories. Was it with an eye to these ceaseless talkers that a clear-sighted ancient thus expressed himself?—‘If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things that are needful to the body; what doth it profit?’¹ And at a still earlier period one who knew the world’s ways had said,—‘In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.’²

Monkhouse thus far agreed with Carlyle’s philosophy of life—he was determined to work out, and not to talk out, his experience. His

¹ James ii. 15, 16.

² Prov. xiv. 23.

theoretic views on religious and ecclesiastical subjects were yet misty and vague; he had hitherto paid but little attention comparatively to the subtle abstract questions of doctrine and discipline which are so often held to be essential to a clergyman's usefulness or dignity. He could assent *ex animo* to the doctrines contained in the Articles and Formularies of the Established Church, and he did not doubt the Scriptural warrant for the Episcopal form of Church government; but upon all those nice distinctions in matters of faith and ritual which of late years have been such fertile sources of discussion and often bitter elements of contention, he had come to no conclusion whatever. He had heard debates on High-churchism and Low-churchism at Oxford between young men whose opinions were delivered with a dogmatism that would have consisted well with the papal claim to infallibility; but he had rarely mixed in such controversies. He had listened to speeches from pugnacious theologians on all sides, some dovetailing the Anglican Church into the Church of Rome, and forming a species of assimilative mosaic, and others willing to forfeit their lives if the Papacy was not at once the man of sin and the lady of ill-fame dressed in scarlet; but he had not given in his adhesion to either extreme. He had read Sermons by clergymen of

the Church of England, some of which verged to the extreme of Arminianism and others descended into the lowest deep of Supra-lapsarianism; but while he did not unduly exalt the powers of the human will, he had been careful not to venture into that unfathomable abyss of religious casuistry where eternal decrees are so familiarly and so presumptuously handled. He was determined to wait and watch and work, while many

reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
Fix'd fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

On no subject was he one to follow a multitude blindfolded, on mental crutches supplied by others; and so, on such much-controverted topics as these, he had resolved to arrive at his conclusion through the path of practical observation as well as abstract reasoning. If ye do, ye shall know, is a hypothetical proposition, the truth of which has a deeper foundation than the writings of Mr. Thomas Carlyle.

The neighbourhood, some short distance from Mudlington, was not without its beauties; and there lodgings pleasant and suitable enough had been engaged for Monkhouse. Frederick Shorland also had apartments in the same locality. A residence in Mudlington proper

would have broken the most elastic spirits, and the temperament of Monkhouse was rather characterised by steady purpose than by natural buoyancy. Even Dolman's boisterous mirth would soon have been quenched by the November mists and fogs of Mudlington. Neither is it always well to be too near your clerical work, whatever Bishops, ecclesiastical and lay, may propound. He who resides in the midst of a poor population has his door incessantly besieged by beggars and the least reputable characters, and his mind is never free from the cares of his office. He has the convenience of being near his work, it is true; but this does not always compensate the loss of energy and health, the depression of mind and weariness of spirit, that are almost necessarily entailed on him by a never-ceasing entanglement in the cares of his duty.

'Well, sir,' said Mr. Shorland, senr., to Monkhouse; 'so you have become a Minister, and intend to make Mudlington the field of your labour. No accounting for taste, at any rate.'

Monkhouse had paid a visit to 'The Oaks' together with Frederick Shorland, soon after his arrival; and the two were spending an hour or so in the evening there.

'What on earth, sir,' continued Mr. Shorland, 'could have induced you to come to such a place?'

Surely you have many nicer parts in your native county? It seems to me a sad thing for a young man to waste his time in trying to civilize a set of beings that can never be made Christians of at any price. I know what the improvidence of the poorer classes is, sir, for I was brought up among them. Besides, you will have to rough it pretty smartly, I expect, among the Mudling-tonians. If you get a smack on one cheek, can you turn the other, sir?’

‘I hope,’ said Monkhouse, ‘I shall never be put to such a test of temper literally; and as for the character of the place, you know, sir, a Clergyman must begin his duties somewhere.’

‘Somewhere! yes, to be sure; but why at Mudlington, of all places in the world? If you had gone to the Hottentots or the Fiji Islands, there would have been more sense in it. Besides, they do not want you there; they did very well without any Church Minister. A ranting preacher and a Particular Baptist parson managed very cleverly for the place, and nobody complained. Why bother yourself about a people that want nothing with you? They are an ungrateful set, too; for, after all I had done for them in giving them employment, they destroyed my property; and at this moment, if I or my son Jacob were to go there, I am told we should be mobbed.’

The truth is, the old gentleman by no means agreed in the propriety of his son's efforts for the good of the district. Not that he cared in the least whether the neighbourhood improved or deteriorated in its social character ; but he had an instinctive perception that these new-fangled notions would be costly to the firm of Shorland and Co.

'Look at Frederick,' he continued; 'he has taken up with a business that has some sense in it, and he is shaping better than might be expected, considering that he was finished off at Oxford. I wonder what good there can be in cramming young lads with Latin and Greek as they do there. What possible use can such fooleries be of to a man as he is making his way through the world? Look into our noble Exchange on a market-day! Why, sir, those men will average their thirty thousand pounds each; and I am pretty sure scarcely one of them ever saw a Latin or Greek book in his life—at least to remember it. Take my word for it, sir, the most classical book you can find is a man's ledger. By the bye, talking of ledgers, where is that mad young fellow that was down with you?—what was his name?—the man that fought those four women up and down, and got beaten—let me see—I mean him who did not know the

meaning of Consols, though he drew his dividends regularly—who took Bills of Exchange for bills of parcels—ha! ha!—and who had never kept a balance-sheet in his life?’

‘He is studying for the Bar, sir, and very probably will be successful in the profession. He has many qualifications suitable for it, and he seems as though he would settle down to the study of the Law and to a systematic preparation for the duties of a Barrister. He might appear to you to talk a little at random, perhaps; but with his rather boisterous spirits he combines strong natural sense.’

‘O, there was nothing amiss in the young madcap; I should not like, though, to engage him as a cashier on any terms. He must have been a wildish companion for Frederick, I guess. But I think he said he had never run into debt—here he showed himself wise.’

‘He did not treat his father well on the Ascot race-ground, to my mind,’ said Jacob; ‘he did not obey the Scriptural precept, when he left his own father in trouble.’

‘No, perhaps not,’ said the Senior; ‘but the foolish old parson mistook his dates, and so he did not deserve much pity.’

‘When I last saw him,’ said Monkhouse, ‘he desired to be kindly remembered to all the

family at 'The Oaks,' and also to Miss Frumpington.'

'Well,' rejoined Mr. Shorland, 'he might do worse than get Miss Frumpington and five thousand a year. An easy bargain that before breakfast. He would come into a fine house and large wine-cellars well stocked, and he would not be bothered with a large family. No need then of bullying witnesses and jaw-rattling to a jury.'

Here Sir Timothy Brierly was announced. 'Show him into my private room' said Mr. Shorland; 'he has come by appointment.'

When the two old gentlemen were in their own apartment and Jacob had left the room, the conversation took a freer turn. Mudlington had been a sore subject with Mr. Shorland, sen., since the time when his mill had been gutted. About that period, too, he had been himself alarmed when in the district; some rough lads had pelted him, and some fierce women had threatened to pitch him into the mill-dam. So that he rarely mentioned the locality when at home, and never but to speak of its inhabitants as a set of ungrateful wretches and brutalized savages.

'May we not enlist you ladies in our operations at Mudlington?' inquired Monkhouse of

Mrs. and Miss Shorland. 'It may call for some self-denial on your part; but your countenance and aid, in however small a degree, will be very valuable to us.'

'Frederick,' said Mrs. Shorland, 'has enlisted us already; we have not begun the campaign, certainly; but now that you have come, and are ready to lead, we shall think it our duty to render what assistance we can in our small way. I fear that the place has been neglected too long, and that we ourselves are not altogether free from blame in the matter.'

'Are you High Church, or Low Church, or Broad Church, Mr. Monkhouse?' inquired Miss Shorland, laughing.

'I am a Churchman,' he replied; 'but I have not yet studied the niceties of Churchmanship. Perhaps I may become more enlightened on such abstruse subjects as I go on.'

'You have a heavy undertaking on hand,' said Mrs. Shorland; 'I hardly know how you will begin. Can you procure any place fit for public worship? It must be some time before a Church can be built in that district.'

'Frederick says it will not be very long, mamma; and he has decided, Mr. Monkhouse, to build a memorial Church on the green where

he got his broken head, and where Mr. Dolman met with his ignominious defeat.'

'I think we shall be able to procure a temporary place of worship,' said Frederick Shorland. 'To-morrow evening we are to have a meeting of the trustees of the Sunday-school on Mount Pleasant, to see if they will permit divine service to be held in it on a Sunday evening.'

'They will only be too glad, I should suppose,' said Miss Shorland; 'for it is a Church of England school.'

'I really do not know what it is, Alice. From what I hear, it is a nondescript; and so far from the trustees welcoming the proposal to hold a service in it, from what I have seen of the men I think they are as likely to refuse permission as not.'

'Are they Churchmen?'

'Churchmen! Most of them seem to be bishops; but of what Christian denomination, they would themselves have some difficulty in deciding. In one thing they agree—each of them seems to estimate pretty highly his own personal qualities. I should not much like to purchase any one of them at his own estimate.'

'I am afraid, Mr. Monkhouse,' said Miss

Shorland, you will have some difficulty in understanding our Yarndale people. You must make up your mind for some rough treatment; but perhaps their peculiarity is more in the manner than the meaning. Their bark may be worse than their bite. I have myself occasionally heard somewhat personal altercations, in which mutual expressions passed, by no means complimentary, but which ended apparently as a matter of course in perfect friendliness and goodwill. Our Northern manufacturing manners, fostered into hardihood by the necessities of trade, may seem strange to a person who has lived in the South all his life, unused to buying and selling, and has come fresh from a three years' residence at Oxford.'

'Shorland here,' said Monkhouse, 'is for ever telling me the same. It is of no use, however, to conjure up imaginary difficulties; it will be time enough to encounter them when they come. I know well enough that, as Clergyman of the Mudlington district, I shall not find my position a bed of roses; but neither could I expect it would be. I hope to do some good in my generation; and if I fail in that here, I shall no doubt gain experience in my new sphere of duty, which I should not have acquired either as an Oxford Tutor or as the Curate of a rural parish.'

‘It is a fortunate thing,’ said Miss Shorland, ‘that you are clever at the acquisition of languages; for you will have to begin with the beginning, and to get up the Mudlington dialect, before you can have much communication with the people.’

‘Well, I am not a Mezzofanti, certainly; but I think I shall be able to overcome the difficulty after a while; I hope to acquire the language sufficiently for practical use, if not to speak it like a native; particularly as I shall learn it from a residence among the people, and so pick it up in its purity.’

‘No doubt you will,’ said Mrs. Shorland; ‘Frederick has already become a proficient in it.’

‘Did you hear,’ asked Frederick Shorland—‘did you hear the dialogue of those two young women we met this morning, as they were looking at you and your spectacles?’

‘I recollect the persons, but do not remember—perhaps did not understand—what they said.’

‘The conversation,’ said Shorland, ‘ran pretty nearly after this fashion. “Loo’ thee, Sal,” said one, “that parson chap’s a fawsish kind o’ felly.” “Whoy,” asked the other, “what’s up with th’ felly?” “Whoy, does na see? He conna believe his oan een.” Now, then, tell us what

it means. Give us a commentary after the fashion of the old Scholiasts.'

'I must admit my want of scholarship in the Lancashire Doric.'

'Well, then, the dialogue may be interpreted thus. "Loo'," an abbreviation for "look;" "Sal" an abbreviation of "Sarah." "Loo' thee, Sal"—"look you, Sarah." Chap and felly are the generic terms for man, as homo, a name common to all men; they have the same meaning, and are idioms peculiar to localities, as "a Bolton chap," "a Rochdale felly." But what does the word "fawsish" mean?'

'False,' said Miss Shorland, 'to be sure.'

'Not exactly; it means here "cunning;" it is no doubt a co-relative of "deceitful," "roguish;" but in the Lancashire dialect a fawse chap is one who is sly, up to a trick or two.'

'And what is your explanation of the concluding remark?' inquired Monkhouse.

'"His oan een"—"his own eyes." He cannot believe his own eyes. He is a sly fellow; he cannot trust his own eyes.'

'"Een," said Monkhouse, is the old English eyne, I suppose:

Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with pink eyne.'

'In the vocabulary of Lancashire,' said Miss

Shorland, 'you will meet with a large assortment of Saxon words; you will find in ordinary use among our lower classes expressions and phrases now quite obsolete among the upper ranks of society, but which are common in our old writers from Chaucer downwards. Where a vocabulary is limited, as among the poorer classes, individual words linger in use longer than among the upper, whose language undergoes greater change.'

'Their abbreviations,' said Shorland, 'and adaptations in the pronounciation of ordinary names are sometimes amusing. I once asked a young woman called "Gomersall," why she went by the name of Gomeras, when she replied, "I suppose it laps better round the tongue."'

And so the evening passed in easy, pleasant conversation among them, savoured with that best of all seasonings—a fixed purpose of ameliorating the lot of their humbler fellow-creatures, by informing their minds and cultivating their hearts, and thus raising them to a capacity for enjoying the blessings that Providence had placed within their reach.

'Well, what is the matter with the master manufacturer?' said Monkhouse to Shorland on their way home. It was a moonlight night, clear and frosty, and they were walking along

at a brisk, healthy pace. 'You seem to be dumbfounded with something; and yet, so far as I can guess, nothing has fallen out within the last hour to damp your ardour. You can have received no bad news from abroad; you cannot have tumbled into a bad debt; you are in no alarm about a turn-out; and yet, you are as dull and doleful as if you expected the bailiffs. What is it?'

'I will tell you,' answered Shorland; 'I have an unpleasant suspicion troubling me.'

'Then lay it aside, or clear it up. At any rate, get rid of it. Drag it into daylight. Make a clean breast of it.'

'We left Sir Timothy Brierly at "The Oaks."'

'Yes, and what then? The knight will not set "The Oaks" on fire, if I judge of him aright; his mind is no lucifer-match, I imagine. I cannot fancy him emitting any scintillæ of thought, any flashes of originality, which are likely to lay the paternal roof in ashes.'

'Be quiet with you; sparks from the skull of a blockhead may set a house on fire as readily as those from the brain of a genius.'

'*Davus sum, non Œdipus.* Expound.'

'Then I will reveal to you my suspicions, in secrecy and confidence, as to a father confessor. I have good reason for believing that the knight

is wishful to negotiate a match with my father between his son Timothy and my sister; and I am not without ground for fancying that his object in visiting "The Oaks" to-night was to arrange the basis of a treaty.'

'Is there any thing to you so very displeasing in this?'

'Displeasing! Of course there is. Is my sister to be bargained away to a jackass?'

'Is she not aware of what is going on?—that is, supposing your suspicion is correct.'

'I do not know that she is; though, if she had any notion of the kind, she is not one to let the world into her secret.'

'Has she herself any preference for the youth, think you? Dolman was jealous of Timothy, and declared to me, in wrath, that he was afraid she would be thrown away upon the puppy, from the attention which he paid her.'

'I cannot suppose that she has any liking for him; but she is not one to show her sentiments very decidedly any way. I do not, however, imagine that she can entertain any feeling for him beyond that of a very ordinary acquaintance.'

'Why not? Timothy, junior, is by no means an ill-looking young man, as times go; he seems determined, amid all the changes of life,

to cultivate assiduously his personal appearance, and he has the ordinary accomplishments of his species, I guess.'

'He is nothing better than a selfish, sensual, licentious, empty-headed puppy. Ladies are sometimes taken with nicely trimmed whiskers, we know; and a youth, like Æsop's goat, with more beard than brains, occasionally finds favour in female eyes before a man of sense. But I hope Alice has more insight into character than to be attracted by a lump of walking conceit; and if her decision be once formed, I am positive she will not be soon moved from it.'

After Monkhouse had reached home, his mind seemed to be attracted, against his will, to the matter of suspicion which Frederick Shorland had divulged to him. He strove to drive it from his thoughts; but the more he strove, somehow the more tenaciously it clung there. 'What matters it to me?' he reasoned, 'whether Timothy Brierly, like a fortunate knight, carry off Alice Shorland the fair, or not? Did I not laugh at Dolman for his incipient jealousy? Would he not make right pleasant sport of me now, if he knew that I was maundering at the prospect of Miss Shorland's engagement? Still, I have some reason for wishing that she may escape the snare, without entertaining any

feeling of attachment for her myself. I do not think that young Brierly is at all her equal; he is much as Shorland describes him, and he would never make her a good husband. Then, I should not like to lose her help in the district of Mudlington; that perhaps is mainly influencing the tone of my ruminations. It is not that I want Miss Shorland for myself—that I can assert somewhat positively, I think. What business has a College Fellow of four months' standing to think of such things? What right has a Curate on 80*l.* a year to harbour the thought of marrying a millionaire's only daughter? Ha! ha! So I hereby declare, myself to myself, that I will think no more upon the matter—I will drive it from my thoughts entirely. Shorland's suspicions are probably quite unfounded; and if not, what business is it of mine? If Miss Shorland continue Miss Shorland, well; if Timothy treats, and succeeds, happy man be his dole!' And Monkhouse took up his Shakspeare to get into a fresh groove of ideas. He began to laugh at the quips and cranks of "funny old Sir John;" but as "sweet Anne Page" came before him, he could not but wonder whether Alice Shorland would consent to be

set quick i' the earth
And bowled to death with turnips,

before she would become Mrs. Timothy Brierly. What did it all mean? Probably it was a mere overflow of the bile; probably it was a spirit of restlessness simply arising out of his present loneliness; probably it was but a passing whim and fancy; probably there was nothing on earth in it, after all.

CHAPTER XX.

A SECRET TREATY UNRATIFIED.

TREATIES are various in kind according to their subject-matter. When emperors meet in conference, a treaty, it may be, follows whereby millions of human beings are transferred from the property of one sovereign to that of another by a mere stroke of the pen. When a pork-butcher in a large way of business enters into a treaty with his Irish friend the agriculturist, the result is that some hundred pigs are transferred from one side of the Channel to the other. At one time, a thousand bales of cotton are the materials over which a treaty is signed; at another, a gentleman and a lady in the prime of existence are the goods over which a bargain is ratified. Life is defined by philosophers in various ways; the truth is, life is one continuous bargain. Nations and hanks of yarn, pigs and ecclesiastical preferments, peerages and linsey-wolsey petticoats, Bishoprics and breadstuffs, Secretaryships of State and half-crown shares of the limited liability order,

animals agricultural and animals of the human species, Livings with their ten thousand souls and live-stock for the market, beauties in harness and beauties in crinoline—are all the subjects of traffic and exchange. And so the world turns round on the pivot of a bargain, and men and women revolve thereupon. No one is too old or too wealthy or too aristocratic, to be “out of business”—not even the Dowager Duchess of Broadlands. She may not deal in the vulgar commodities of trade; she may not have a floating capital invested in apples and oranges, brandy-balls and Barcelonas, like that old lady with her stall on the opposite side of the way; but she has transactions, you may be sure, in Valenciennes lace and marriageable ladies, in Genoa velvets and unmarried gentlemen, inheritors of broad domains and attenuated ideas. Great marriages are said, in the public prints, to have been “arranged.”

While the conversation recorded in the last chapter was going on in the drawing-room, Mr. Shorland and Sir Timothy Brierly were engaged upon a subject of considerable interest to them, inasmuch as it partook of the nature of a bargain. They were in Mr. Shorland's private apartment, seated on each side of a cozy fire, while an abundant supply of wines and spirituous liquors, with water hot and cold, was

on the table. Sir Timothy had mixed himself a stiff glass of warm brandy-and-water; the master of the house preferred sherry, having all his life manifested a strong dislike to any liquid that might confuse the head, when he was engaged in a fencing-match of bargain and sale. Both the gentlemen seemed aware that such an encounter was at hand, and consequently were a little constrained in manner; neither was willing to open the real, though not ostensible, business for which they had met. Mr. Shorland, it is true, was cooler and more indifferent than his friend, from the certainty that he had, to use a phrase common with him, 'got hold of the better end of the stick;' and so he awaited the opening of the attack with the composure and steadiness of a practised swordsman or a skilful strategist.

'Well, Shorland,' at length Sir Timothy broke ground, after taking a deep pull at his brandy-and-water—'about that little matter we just touched on promiscuously a week ago?'

'Well,' replied his host imperturbably; 'what about it?'

'It seems to me,' continued the knight, 'that the thing might be managed in a very becoming and business-like way. My son and your daughter might have been made for each other,

you see ; he is a handsome young man and she is a handsome young woman ; they have known each other since they were children, and they always looked, as Lady Brierly says, the nicest couple at all the juvenile balls. So far as I can see, they are on an equal footing in every way, on an average. I think it likely enough you will cut up a little fatter than I, so far as money goes ; but then I have had the honour of kneeling before her Majesty the Queen and being invested with the rank of knighthood, besides having occupied the conspicuous position of Mayor of the city of Yarndale—ahem !’

‘ Mayor of the city of Yarndale ! What silly fellows you members of the Corporation are, to be sure ! You go strutting about like peacocks, as if you were all Grand Dukes, from the man who owns a warehouse to the man who keeps a ginshop ; you chatter and palaver at your meetings, as if you were the greatest orators in the kingdom, and you love to see your names in print : you will talk by the hour over a stench-trap or a dung-heap ; and yet you have not the common wit to see that people are jeering and laughing at you at every street-corner. As for your wealth, I dare say you are rich enough, for the matter of that ; but do not set yourself up, Brierly, because you are a knight and have been a Mayor. To tell you the truth,

I would scarcely share your honours, if you would share with me your property.'

'Aye, aye; you pretend to despise the dignities of life, Shorland. Is it because the grapes are sour, eh?'

'They would prove sour, if I were to taste them—that I know. So keep your knighthood in your pocket for a while, and on to business.'

'Then, allow me to say, Shorland, that my son is anxious, out of a dutiful respect for his seniors, that you and I should arrange together all matters of business connected with this affair; the love department of the matter may be left to the young people themselves; and, if I might venture to give an opinion on so delicate a question, I think Timothy has an undeniable affection for your daughter Alice.'

'Why, as to that, I fancy neither of us, Brierly, is much of a judge on such a subject. If it were a matter of yarns, or calicoes, or carpets, we should be as clever in forming an opinion as our neighbours; but about that which young people call love, our judgment, I guess, would not be of much value in the market.'

'Why not?' asked the knight, sharply; 'I can understand its nature, Shorland, as well as any man'—here he took a refreshing draught of brandy-and-water—'Lady Brierly is the wife

of my bosom'—here he laid his hand on his breast—'and the flame of my affection for her is still burning brightly on the altar of my heart, on an average.'

'Well, well, take care it does not singe your shirt and waistcoat. Only keep it safe. Women lose their hearts, men lose their hearts; so people say; but the hearts mostly return, like that little terrier Nathan Sykes sold twenty times for a shilling a time, knowing it would come back. Now, as for your son, if I may tell you my mind, Brierly, I fancy, notwithstanding what you say, that he has no very extensive dealings in that commodity called love. At any rate, I think he keeps a monopoly of the article for himself, and does not allow it to be interfered with very much, so far as others are concerned.'

'Now, now, Shorland, don't say so; you are hard on the young man. What would you have? What would you have? Here is a fine tall fellow, handsome and aristocratic—'

'Wheugh!'

'Yes, handsome and aristocratic, I say, on an average.'

'You take your average rather low, Brierly: depend on it, you would not take stock in that fashion.'

'Handsome and aristocratic, I repeat, Shor-

land. What would you have? May he not wear hair on his upper lip and long whiskers without being thought conceited? May he not assume, with his pretensions, a military air, and ride a dashing horse, without being called a fop? Handsome and aristocratic, I say again! My daughter says that he is the only young man in Yarnale whose appearance is really distin—there is a French word for it, but I forget it—something striking, you know. And as to accomplishments, my impression is, having watched him with interest from the day he was born, as being destined to hand down the family name—my impression is that he is a youth of unquestionable intellect and uncommon sentiment.’ Here the knight brought his hand heavily on the table, as a clincher to his asseverations.

‘ Well, be it so,’ replied Shorland; ‘ he may be all you say, for aught I know; nor does it matter much about what people call feeling and sentiment. My idea is, that the less of such things folks have, the better tradesmen they will make. The head, Brierly, is the machine that makes the fortune, and the less you have to do with the heart the better—it only stands in the way—it puts the head out of gear. Now, as to business habits, I am not quite clear that your son is up to the mark.’

‘ And why not, pray?’ inquired Sir Timothy,

somewhat indignantly. Here he was touched upon a point of honour, and he determined to stand his ground firmly against his more wily antagonist. He did not care so much that his son should be called a fop; but that his business qualifications should be disputed, was a far more offensive aspersion. So the knight took a deep draught of brandy-and-water, and was on the point of being angry, as he continued, —‘And why not? how could you suppose that my son Timothy is not a first-rate tradesman?’

‘Well, Brierly, if I must speak, he seems to me to be a little above his business. He struts on ’Change more like a Field Marshal than a Yarndale merchant; he twirls the hair on his upper lip as if he made it more of an idol than his cotton-twist; he rides hunting horses when he would be better at his mill. Depend on it, he would be more profitably employed in polishing the leather of his counting-house stool than his buckskin breeches. Now, a man that does so, Brierly, is throwing away chances in the market; while he is admiring his red coat, clever tradesmen are picking up bargains. Take my word for it, neither your fortune nor mine would have been made by swaggering with our hats on one side of our head, and smoking cigars, and dressing in flashy waist-

coats, and riding like fools after a set of dogs with a fox in front of them.'

'You're too bad for anything, Shorland,' said Sir Timothy, who had listened impatiently to his friend's homily. 'My son, with his pretensions, cannot be expected to work as we worked when we were at his age. We had then to live on fifteen shillings a week, and our prospects were very uncertain; he has his fortune made, I may say, and if business is only kept in its regular train, all will be right. He is our only son too, and, as we hope, will convey the family name down to posterity. He cannot be required, therefore, to undergo the same drudgery as we did when we were young, and so he takes a little enjoyment now and then in reason—and why not, on an average? But a better man of business, sir, does not exist, when he is at it; he is a capital judge of cotton; he understands machinery; he is well up in book-keeping; he is a first-rate hand at a bargain; and for pushing trade he is a topper—a topper, sir. Why, I'll back him against your Jacob for any sum you like for his business-like qualities; and as for your Oxford son, I fancy he would come a long way behind both—that's all.'

'Very well, very well,' replied Mr. Shorland calmly; 'it may be as you say. My Oxford

son though, as you call him, is not shaping amiss, if he would only give up his crotchets about raising Mudlington into a Christian place. I'm afraid he is going to spend money unnecessarily on his fancies; he is foolish, I willingly admit, in that matter; but the youth is not without some capacity for trade. Indeed, in his dealings with the people around him, both rich and poor, he seems to gain their confidence in a way that is very satisfactory.'

'Then, sir, you will not deny, I expect, that my son Timothy is a man of business, first-rate?'

'Well, I'll take your word for it, Brierly, fenting it a little, you know—docking off some discount of course, as for a ready-money transaction. But there is one thing I must mention—it would not be right to leave it out of consideration—your son is a Dissenter—'

'A Nonconformist.'

'Well, your son is a Nonconformist, and my daughter is a Church-woman.'

'And what of that?' inquired the knight, somewhat indignantly. 'Is not an Independent as good as a Churchman any day in the week, I should like to know? Have not Nonconformists a perfect right to hold up their heads as high as people who go to Church? What are Church-folks, tell me, that they need be so

proud? Look at our Corporation, elected by the free suffrages of our citizens! Have we ever chosen a Mayor yet who was really a Churchman? Listen! Jackson a Unitarian—Warbeck an Independent—Booth a Baptist—Dickenson a Methodist—Mumbleton a Scotch Presbyterian—Figgins a Swedenborgian—myself, ahem! an Independent;—why, you can't point to a single Churchman who has been raised to the exalted position of Mayor of Yarndale. See, again, how our Town Council is composed. Out of the sixty men chosen by our people to represent their important interests there, I'll answer for it you cannot find six who are members of the Church. Does not this prove how much higher Nonconformists stand in Yarndale than your Church people?'

'What you say, Brierly, about the proportion of members, may be true; but I scarcely see your proof. It shows that Dissenters, or Nonconformists, or what you will, are more bustling and busy politicians; but I do not see that it proves anything else.'

'What? not that they are considered men of more consequence and mark—men of higher grade, you understand—on an average?'

'No, I think not. It matters very little to what religious denomination your politicians belong, if only you will make your profession

large enough, and your promises broad enough, and your articulation loud enough. I do not think that Churchmanship has much to do with the question, except that they who belong to that class are mostly reluctant to mix themselves up in Election contests and Town squabbles.'

'I do not agree with you at all, Shorland,' said the knight, who was waxing warm in defence of dissent, and was fast becoming eloquent under the inspiration of anger and brandy;— 'we are chosen to manage the business of the city because we are considered more trustworthy. And then, are not our Ministers as good as your Clergymen? Are they not as eloquent, and as striking, and as powerful, and as impressive? Are they not as popular and as dignified, and as genteel? Is not Dr. McThwacker, with his fine open countenance and full-toned voice and manly form, equal to any of your thread-paper parsons with their white faces and their prim dresses and their lisping affectation?'

'Well, those are subjects, Brierly, on which I do not pretend to be much of a judge. It seems to me that, between the parsons and the preachers, it may be six of one and half-a-dozen of the other. Your dissenting—nonconformist, I mean—minister appears to me to turn up the

whites of his eyes more easily, and to lay down the law more sonorously, and to devour a good dinner more greedily; but the Church parson has his whims and prettinesses and affectations after a quieter fashion. They are both great men in their way, and neither of them thinks small things of himself, you may be sure. There is much the same spirit, Brierly, under the yellow-looking shirt of Dr. McThwacker and the prim High Church waistcoat of the Rev. Augustus Meikle.'

'I really do not see,' said Sir Timothy, 'that you have any reason to find fault with our body, Shorland. You once, you know, belonged to it yourself.'

'Why, bless your life, Brierly, I am finding no fault with it whatever. I am raising no objection to it at all. Let every man choose a religious denomination for himself, say I. Why not have free trade in religion as well as in commerce? We ask no question in business to what sect a customer belongs. It makes no matter to me, whether I sell to a Mahometan or Methodist—provided he pays me ready money. And why should we interfere in our social concerns with a man on the score of his religion?'

'I do not see, Shorland, why with your notions you ever became a Churchman at all.

If you believe that one party in religion is as good as another, why did you turn ?’

‘Why turn ? I became a Churchman, as you say, when we took up our residence here. It was the women, however, more than myself. I care little about such things, for my own part ; but I am not sure whether you would not meet with a warm reception, if you tried to convert my wife and daughter back again.’

‘But your son Jacob is more than half a Non-conformist yet, you know. He delights to sit under Dr. McThwacker when he has the opportunity ; and his tone smacks more of our party than yours.’

‘Yes, perhaps ; but I like him none the better for that. As for his quoting Scripture, he has a perfect right to do so, if he only does it in season ; but he sometimes does it out of season. The truth is, Brierly, a man should never quote Scripture in a Warehouse ; he is immediately put down as a hypocrite and a cheat, if he does. Jacob would have worn a white neckerchief ; but I exerted my paternal authority, and forbid it. You know very well, Brierly—for there is no secret between us in the matter as men of trade—you know that when a customer enters a Warehouse, and finds the salesman that attends him wearing a white neckcloth and fond of quoting Scripture, he immediately suspects

a "sell." I do not, therefore, allow white neckerchiefs in my sale-rooms, and so far as I can prevent our people quoting Scripture, I do so. The only time, Brierly, when I was ever fairly "done"—"done" with my eyes open—"done" like a baby or an idiot—was by a man who wore a white neckcloth, snuffled through his nose, and had texts from the Bible at his tongue's end. Well, he cheated me at all points—in the quality of the goods he sold me, in the quantity, and in the price; and I had no redress whatever. I was off my guard, and had taken no precaution. The old rogue! when I went to him and told him a piece of my mind, which was, that he was a discreditable hypocrite and a barefaced cheat, he got over it by saying very coolly, that "all who will live godly will suffer persecution." You will recollect old Deacon Brunskill very well. At one time, I believe, he had made a deal of money; but he continued too long in business, and his sons robbed him sadly; if I recollect right, he died in a Workhouse, or next door to it, and nobody pitied him. No, no, you do not notice the best qualities in my son Jacob, when you point to his fondness for quoting texts of Scripture.'

'My son has not that habit, I am sure,' said the knight; 'indeed, I should not be sorry if he took to Scripture a little more kindly than

he does. I very much doubt whether he could tell on any sabbath what had been Dr. McThwacker's text, and as to knowing what the discourse was about, I am compelled to say that he often falls asleep during its delivery.'

'Like enough, like enough,' said Mr. Shorland; 'tastes differ in this world; and yet, if I remember aright, the Doctor has no ordinary lungs.'

'Come, now, don't talk so,' said the knight; 'the Doctor is powerful—he is powerful—as an expounder, I assure you. But about your daughter, Shorland—what objection can she have to my son, because he is a Nonconformist?'

'I very much fear,' said the other, 'that she would not like now to "sit under" Dr. McThwacker, as you call it.'

'Why not? Have you any objection to the match on the score of our being Independents?'

'O, as far as I am concerned, I have no preference at all. Independents get on in the world as well as other people, for aught I know. A hundred-pound note from a Dissenter is as good as a hundred-pound note from a Churchman. I think all these distinctions foolish enough, for my own part; but, as I have just said, tastes vary in this world.'

‘Do you know anything about your daughter’s taste on such a matter?’ inquired the knight.

‘I know nothing at all about it, from anything I have heard her say, Brierly. But my impression is this, that when once people get to ride in their carriages and are Church-people, they very seldom become Dissenters. The fact is, you are too rough for folks who fancy they have become refined. Your preachers shout and rant and stamp too much for them. Ladies, especially young ladies, have delicate nerves; they are like tender plants in a flower-pot. Now, your ministers come down on them like a hurricane and a thunderstorm, while Clergymen are more like zephyrs playing and dews falling. And since my son has been at Oxford I fancy that the female part of my family has more than ever got hold of this notion of Church-membership. It is foolish enough in them, I admit; but it cannot be helped. They listen evidently with more impatience to Jacob’s texts of Scripture; and Frederick not long ago told him, in my hearing, that he had better turn preacher in the particular Baptist persuasion and exhaust his quotations on Sunday, so as to leave us unmolested on the week-day. Indeed, I heard some of these young Oxford fellows once talking about religious denomi

nations; and it was clear to me that they thought a Dissenter was some strange being, if I may say it, of an inferior order in creation.'

'A what? Inferior order!—Dr. McThwacker!—the Rev. Jabez Jobson! Think of our Yarn-dale Corporation! Think of our many respectable firms who are proud of their non-conformity! Are the puppies mad, I wonder? Are they mad? If they said such a thing to me, sir, I would—I would—knock them down—on an average;' and here Sir Timothy's closed hand fell heavily on the table, as if he was crushing some imaginary scorner.

'Yes, and you would serve them quite right,' said Mr. Shorland. 'They are simpletons to talk so, I allow; but the greater goose a man is, the more difficulty you have in persuading him that he is one.'

'I tell you what, Shorland,' said the knight, authoritatively; 'once for all, I have not the slightest apprehension that there will be any obstacle to the match on the score of religious opinion.'

During this conversation Mr. Shorland maintained his usual cool and calculating demeanour. He was the same man as if he were in his counting-house or his sale-room. He had depreciated young Timothy partly from a sincere belief in

his foppery, but more particularly did he think it tradesmanlike to pick holes in him, as he would in any article which had been offered to him for purchase. He felt bound, as a man of business, to cheapen him down from the price that had been set on him.

‘But has your son ever said anything about marriage to my daughter?’ inquired Mr. Shorland.

‘Why, no, I believe not; but he has paid her attentions—paid her attentions, as they call them. There cannot be a doubt she has understood what they meant. My son thought it better that we should have some conversation on the matter, first of all.’

‘Well done, Timothy, junr.! I begin to think, after all, that you will not miss the main chance; you are a better man of business than I took you for.’

‘Now, Shorland, don’t talk in that way; it is only natural and right that the young man should see his way clearly.’

‘Well, but how do we know that the girl will have anything to say to him?’

‘I tell you again, Shorland, there cannot be much doubt about that. Where can you pick out a finer young man than my son?—not in Yarndale, I expect. There is not a lady in the city or neighbourhood, I am bold to say, who

would not be delighted at the prospect of a match with him. Where can you meet with one who has so genteel an air and such refinement of taste? Where can you find one who sings and dances and rides as well?’

‘Pooh, pooh! asses’ tricks—asses’ tricks!’

‘Yes, in your opinion; but those are the things for making an impression on ladies’ hearts, just as we stamp our goods with our own die. Lady Brierly calls these accomplishments Cupids’ arrows, and she said to me last night, as she was laying her head on the pillow, that she firmly believed that Timothy, by his graceful attentions, has made a deep and lasting impression. You know but little about such things, Shorland. You give your mind to speculation and trade, and have no notion of the tender affections. You do not consider how susceptible of tender and delicate emotions young ladies are, when courted by a youth of elegant accomplishments, as is my son. Their hearts, Shorland, are just like this lump of sugar—they melt away gradually with the warm nectar of love.’ Here he dropped a piece of sugar into his brandy-and-water, and watched it with a sentimental air till it was dissolved.

The brandy-and-water, combined with natural excitement, was beginning to tell visibly upon

the knight; he was entering upon that stage of feeling called the maudlin, and he would have advanced rapidly onward, had not Mr. Shorland warned him that sentimentalism did not become a man of business.

‘You and Lady Brierly,’ Mr. Shorland continued, ‘may talk about your son making an impression; but I am not so sure. I have not, it is true, paid much attention to the matter; but all I know is, that the wench resembles her father in this, that she has a will of her own when it is called out.’

‘Depend upon it, Shorland, that is the last thing we need trouble ourselves about. Your daughter is a smart young lady, well-informed and accomplished; and my son is a man of genteel manners and a beauty without paint (a slight hiccup). They were made for each other, Shorland, you may be sure. Their hearts will agree also, as well as their personal appearance. There will be between them a perfect—a perfect—hang it! what is that long word barristers and judges are for ever using?—perfect compati—pati—patibility of temper and disposition—on an average.’

‘Well, and taking your supposition for granted, what next?’ inquired Mr. Shorland, well knowing that the preceding conversation

was but a preliminary to the real business of the evening.

‘Why, Shorland,’ said the knight, ‘I think we should settle a sufficient income on the young couple for the future. Trade, you know, is uncertain; we are rich merchants one year and beggars the next; we see the ups and downs of life every day among our friends and acquaintances in Yarndale; and a man like you, who can see as far into a millstone as most, will admit that it is only right for us to settle something on the young couple.’

Sir Timothy had pondered this address beforehand, as he intended it to be the main speech of the evening; and he delivered it with tolerable precision, considering that the brandy-and-water was fast making inroads on his faculties.

‘No doubt,’ said the other, coolly, ‘you will think it right to settle a handsome sum on my daughter, if she is to marry your son; but I cannot see that I have anything to do with that, beyond taking care that the business is completed with legal exactness. I shall unquestionably make the proper provision for the girl in my will; but I cannot conceive how I am bound to make any settlement on her at her marriage.’

Sir Timothy and his son had no doubt

weighed Mr. Shorland in the scales, and finding him heavy had calculated on a considerable fortune for the daughter on the father's death. Indeed, that was the young man's main motive in seeking the alliance. 'Still a bird in the hand,' thought they, 'is worth two in the bush; and if we can get the old man to come down now with a handsome settlement, it will be all the better.'

'Why,' reasoned the knight, 'it would be advisable, I think, that you should; it would be safer, you know; not that there is any danger in such undertakings as yours, but we are both in trade, you understand—both in trade—and trade is slippery always.'

'Yes, but your son is a partner with you, and in receipt of a considerable income, I fancy; he can support a wife, I should say, very handsomely, and go on accumulating capital at the same time. It is true enough that you and he should settle a fair and reasonable sum on my daughter; but it is not a matter at all on which I am called upon to "come down." Come now, what do you say, Brierly, to ten thousand pounds? It is not much, to be sure; but it is not so easy, we know, to get our money all at once out of circulation.'

Sir Timothy protested against putting down ten thousand pounds alone, and went on drinking

brandy-and-water hot and very sweet. He began to lose his aptitude for a bargain, and to maunder sentimentalisms, mixing up love and lump-sugar, matrimonial bliss and madapollams, the markets and marriage, in his conversation,—all upon an average; he declared over and over again that Timothy Brierly, junr., was the sweetest youth in all creation, and that he and Alice Shorland had been destined for each other from their mothers' milk.

Mr. Shorland saw at once that it was time to close the conference; it had gone just as far as he wished, and the knight was no longer equal to the occasion. The question, therefore, remained as it was, certain propositions having been thrown out as the basis of a treaty, and the negotiations ending there for the present.

'Well,' said Mr. Shorland to his wife, as they were retiring for the night, 'what do you think Brierly has been proposing to me this evening? I am afraid, though, he took too much brandy-and-water, and talked himself into a knot. What fools men are to drink hard when they have business on hand! But what do you suppose his proposal was about?'

'I cannot say, I am sure; some business matter, probably.'

'Yes, in one sense; he has been wishing to

strike up a match between his son and Alice. What do you think of it? Has such a probability ever occurred to you? What would Alice think about it, do you imagine?’

Mrs. Shorland could make a shrewd guess that the discussion had turned upon money, and she felt shocked at the cool manner in which the parent had been treating a question involving so entirely the future happiness of her daughter; but from long experience of her husband she thought it best to conceal her feelings and to fence with the subject. She had not a very high opinion of young Brierly herself, nor did she think that her daughter was greatly captivated by his attentions.

‘As to the probability of such a match,’ said Mrs. Shorland, ‘I cannot say that it has ever seriously occurred to me. The young man has seemed to be attentive to Alice; but I have never supposed that it sprung from anything but old acquaintance. As to what she would think of the proposal, I have no notion. You know that she does not let people very much into her secrets. Indeed, I rather suspect that, besides being civil and polite, she has no feeling towards young Brierly at all; but, of course, I cannot be positive on the matter. Do you not think it would be better to have no more to

say to Sir Timothy about it? At any rate, would it not be well to put it off for the present?’

‘The offer is not such a bad one, after all,’ Mr. Shorland began to mutter to himself, as though he were balancing in his mind the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal,— ‘Brierly must be worth his hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and nine-tenths of it will come to his son in the end. The cub is well enough to look at, too; and, if he were not such a fop, might make a decent tradesman. But then he is young, and his sillinesses will wear off in time. Alice might do worse. Well, there is no need of hurry in the business; it will keep awhile. I will watch the turn of events, and probably I may make some capital out of it.’ And so ruminating the old gentleman got into bed, and in a few minutes began to dream of the last cargo of goods that he had sent out to Hong Kong.

CHAPTER XXI.

A COMMITTEE MEETING.

THE Committee for the management of the Mount Pleasant Sunday School had assembled there, and the subject of consideration for the night was the very important one,—whether the building should be given up on a Sunday evening to the Rev. Mr. Monkhouse, for the celebration of Public Worship according to the rites and usages of the Established Church.

The School was a spacious structure, nor was it ill designed; but it had gone out of repair: it looked dingy and forlorn, as though it had been for some time under the paternal tutelage of the Court of Chancery. It had been built about thirty years before, mainly by members of the Church of England, but most likely without a definite purpose of attaching it to any religious denomination whatever. A deed of conveyance was executed, and Trustees had been appointed, but it was doubtful whether any of them were living. They, therefore, who were now *quasi* Trustees of the School, had simply

become so from their personal connection with it, and their active share in its management.

About a dozen members were present in council; and it may not be amiss, as we may meet with some again, to give a slight sketch of two or three of the most prominent among them.

Mr. Absalom Jenkins, who was voted to the Chair, was a well known man in those parts. He was about fifty years of age, and had been a fortunate tradesman throughout his life, being now in independent possession of between two and three thousand a year. He was short in stature, and had a countenance indicative of great keenness; he was always on the move, and from his jaunty manner he gave evidence that he did not intend to sleep away his existence. He was a member, too, of the Yarndale Corporation, and brought forward important resolutions there. Wherever he was, he was bustling and mercurial,—sometimes promoting works of usefulness, and sometimes losing his common sense in a haze of fussiness,—on the whole, perhaps, doing considerably more good than harm in his sphere.

Mr. Absalom Jenkins professed to do everything on Christian principles: his every act, from the least to the greatest, he regulated, on his own announcement, by this high standard; whether he was engaged in conducting an

important bargain, or lecturing a committee, or scolding an old apple-woman, he did it on Christian principles. Some people were ungracious enough to say that his Christian principles were occasionally elastic; but he always maintained them in some form for his guidance; he acted according to his view of them for the time being; and though his impulsiveness frequently drove him into follies, and his manner was from habit often positive and pragmatic, his intentions on the whole were praiseworthy and good. He was a Churchman, and had been so for the most of his life; but he was a Churchman of a somewhat capricious order; he thought for himself, but his religious ideas were somewhat variable,—sometimes in a higher scale of the barometer and sometimes in a lower, but never in any state of the atmosphere reaching the mark of High-churchism: he was following the guidance of John Calvin at present.

Mr. Nehemiah Croasdale was present at the meeting: he was not an ill-meaning man; he had more sensibility than many of those in Yarndale who had grown up amidst hardships and struggles; but he was very crotchety when left to his own sentiments, especially in religious doctrine. He was Calvinistic in his sympathies; but as he drew out seven gradations on the

ladder of Calvinism, and as he himself adopted an intermediate point between the fourth and the fifth, as the peg on which to hang his faith, he had never yet found a preacher with whom he thoroughly agreed.

Mr. Jabez Corby, the Vice-Chairman of the Meeting, had been brought up in the Mount Pleasant Sunday School, and had risen to be a species of chemical drysalter, and a wholesale dealer in soda-water, ginger-beer, and other such effervescents. His aspect was a composite of the smiling and the cynical—steady and unchanging. It was a noteworthy occasion when Jabez was known to agree in opinion with man, woman, or child. He was said to be sincerely religious, and in a sense he probably was; but, as concerning others, his religion went far enough to make him unpleasant, and no further. ‘Ah!’ his friends said of him, ‘Jabez is rather crotchety and cross-grained, we admit; but his intentions are good, his intentions are good!—he means well, he means well!—there are worse men than Jabez.’ He was a slow and deliberate speaker, and mostly prolix and tiresome out of all reason; he was provokingly cool too in all his bitter sayings, and was seldom excited by a peevish retort. He had absorbed into his system much of his own acid, but he was not in affinity with the

alkali that causes the effervescence. His prevailing sentiments were politico-religious; and he believed that all national misery and all spiritual danger radiated from the Vatican. He had written in the Newspapers as much as would fill volumes, to prove that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was gradually sinking into a bottomless pit which was being dug by the Jesuits under the direction of the Pope. Alas! Jabez, with all thy good intentions, thou carriest a Pope within thee as dogmatic and impracticable and infallible as thy detested foe in the seven-hilled city! Whenever anything disastrous was going on, whether of small or great moment, at home or abroad, he always shook his head oracularly, and pronounced that the battle of Armageddon was commencing. 'Depend upon it, sir, the battle of Armageddon is beginning!'

As a conspicuous member of the Committee, moreover, stood forth Mr. Phineas Bompas. He was a shopkeeper in Mudlington, dealing in articles general and miscellaneous. He was an advocate for a free gospel, as he termed it; and, added to his duties in Mount Pleasant Sunday School, he did a great amount of preaching on his own account, in the several chapels round about, besides offering to an occasional customer a 'word in season' over

half-a-pound of tallow candles or a box of Cockle's pills. 'My dear,' he would say to a young girl over his counter, 'here are the pills; take two at night and one in the morning, and see that you offer up your prayers regularly, and good is sure to come of it.' He was a Boanerges in his line, powerful and thundering; and several old ladies had been heard to say, that 'at splaining and splounding (explaining and expounding) Maester Bompas was uncommon.' He never spoke, even in common conversation, without clearing his throat three times at least; and, as the characteristic features of his class, he had a round head with bristling hair, rolling eyes exhibiting a large expanse of white, a sepulchral voice, an unpleasing countenance, a very black muzzle, and very large teeth. He was not held in high estimation by well-judging people around; indeed, he was regarded as a somewhat dubious character, and, whether in his pecuniary means or his religious professions, he only stood in an equivocal position.

Mr. Jacob Shorland was present; he had been a nominal director for some time, but had never taken an active part in the management of the school. On so important an occasion as the present, however, his conscience had compelled him to attend the meeting. Frederick Shorland and Graham were there also, but merely on

sufferance, in the character of petitioners for the use of the building; they were ready, too, to offer their services in carrying on the operations of the institution. There were several present besides these; but, as they were men without anything very distinctive in their tone of mind, it is unnecessary to give a description of them.

Mr. Jenkins (after offering up prayer for guidance): ‘Gentlemen, we have met together to-night on a very important occasion. It seems that a Minister of the Established Church has been appointed to take charge of the district of Mudlington, and an application has been made to us, as the Committee for the management of the Mount Pleasant Sunday School, to permit the gentleman to hold an Evening Service in it. This is no light subject for us to deliberate on, and in all we do it behoves us to act on Christian principles. Now, I must first observe that, according to my notion of what is Scriptural, if a Minister were to be appointed at all, we should ourselves have had the appointment. (Hear.) Of this Clergyman we know nothing. Who is he? His name, I am told, is Monkhouse—a name, the first half of which has a bad sound; but I should be sorry, as a Christian man, to attach too much importance to that, or to condemn a Clergyman’s

principles solely on the ground of his family name. (Hear, hear.) But I have seen this Minister—for a short time, it is true—but in a short interview it is possible to form an opinion of his fitness for such a place as preacher in Mount Pleasant School. He is a decent person enough in his manners; but he speaks in such a finiky, mincing way, that our people will not be able to understand him. In my opinion, he is far too fine a man for the place. (Hear.) Why, it was at the end of the week when I met him, and he had evidently had a clean shirt and white neckerchief on that morning. It might, it is true, be only a dickey—(A voice: ‘Richard the Third,’ and a laugh)—for, on Christian principles, I do not wish to overstate the matter; but, however that may be, he had no look of a working man about him. Now, can a man have a clean shirt on every day on eighty or ninety pounds a year? Has a man any business to mince and talk like a lady on eighty pounds a year? I only know that when I made only eighty pounds a year, I had often to go with a black face and dirty breeches. (Hear.) I pay a book-keeper a hundred a year; but, if I saw him beginning to dress in a dandified fashion, I should soon begin to look sharp after my ledger. Mudlington wants a man with a missionary heart in his belly and a

missionary coat on his back,—not a man with a gold watch-guard and Wellington-boots. Did the Apostles wear watch-guards? Did the Apostles wear Wellington-boots? Did the Apostles wear straps to their trousers? (A derisive laugh). Gentlemen, I answer fearlessly, emphatically, No. Besides, what saith the Scripture? “Take no thought for the morrow, neither what ye shall eat, nor what ye shall drink, nor wherewithal ye shall be clothed.” These, gentlemen, are Christian principles. (Hear.) Further, what are the opinions of this Mr. Monkhouse? His personal appearance, after all, is not a very material point in comparison with the doctrines which he holds. (Hear.) I am willing to pass over the consideration, whether he can afford to pay for a clean shirt every day in the week, and whether his clothes are cut in the fashionable style,—only I recollect a man once who wore a watch-guard and smart boots on ninety pounds a year, and he had soon to run his country; I do not know, however, that we have any Scriptural right to inquire into his means, as we are not bound with him for his expenses—(hear)—even if we allow him our School for an Evening Service—but we are bound to inquire into his doctrines. What does he believe? What does he not believe? What does he preach? Does his

gospel come with power? Gentlemen, give me sound doctrine, whether a man wears a clean shirt or not. (Hear, hear.) This we must have, or nothing at all. Better no gospel than half a gospel; better a heathen than half a Christian. Our school, it is true, is not used on an evening; but better it should not be used at all than used in the service of Satan. It would be an awful thing if our dear young immortals, fed morning and afternoon on the bread of life, should have poison thrust down their throats before they went to bed at night. The question, then, is,—Will this Mr. Monkhouse preach the gospel as it ought to be preached?—not Mr. So-and-so's gospel, but the pure and unadulterated gospel as interpreted by John Calvin? (Expressions of dissent.) Now this young Minister, I hear, is from Oxford—that place out of which so much abomination has sprung. (Hear, hear.) Has not the Scripture said,—Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Observe, I do not say that this Mr. Monkhouse is a papist, for I have never heard what his sentiments are; but he must have breathed the atmosphere of Popery for some time, and it seems to me as if Puseyism, which is only a new name for Popery, was as catching as the cow-pox. (A laugh.) I must remark, too, and I do it with

deep pain—for I am not desirous of casting reflection on any man's moral character—I must remark, to clear my own conscience, that I have heard of his frequenting the Theatre at Oxford; nay, I was told that he actually recited a Prize Essay, or some such vain and hurtful piece of composition, in the Theatre—in the Theatre, gentlemen, think of that! Would any man of Christian principles have done such a thing? I answer emphatically, fearlessly, No. (Hear, hear.) I move, therefore, that a deputation be appointed to confer with Mr. Monkhouse, and to inquire into his doctrines and his previous mode of life. Nobody can deny that this is a fair and just proposition; it is acting on Christian principles; it is following out the golden rule of doing to others as you would have others do to you.' ('Yes,' 'No,' and applause.)

Mr. Corby: 'It is now generally admitted that most of the evils that have befallen communities and individuals for the last century have originated directly or indirectly in the order of Jesuits. By that expression I do not mean only the sworn disciples of Ignatius Loyala, but all kindred classes. The old French revolution was promoted by the Clubs, and the Clubs were instigated by the Jesuits; the many distractions that have agitated the Continent

have been fostered by them ; our own nation is never at rest because of them. Are they not found in our two Houses of Parliament, plying their vocation ? Have we not them nearer home, in our Common Councils ? Who but they promoted that attack on the Gas Committee ? Why was it, but that they might carry on their perfidious designs in the dark ? Who but they strove to reduce the Police-rate ? Was it not that they might escape detection in their nefarious intrigues ? Do they not insinuate themselves as housemaids and nurses into quiet families, in order to corrupt the infant mind ? Could the boards of omnibuses and the cushions of railway-carriages speak, they would a tale unfold of the devices of these secret conspirators. ('Question, question.')

I feel much obliged to those who are calling "question ;" but, according to my humble capacity of judgment, I am speaking strictly to the question, and if my kind friends will endeavour to listen with something like patience to anyone's opinions but their own, I will show them how I am doing so. Oxford, I am sorry to have to say it, has of late years been a prolific mother and a succulent wet-nurse of that pestilent body, the Jesuits—(hear)—and if Mr. Monkhouse comes straight from that seat, I will not say of learning, but of false doctrine, it becomes a

grave question how far he is a fit and proper person to preach in Mount Pleasant School, Mudlington. On this point I think we ought to come to a clear understanding with him. (Hear.) Is he likely to inoculate the minds of our dear young people—as you, sir, properly termed them, dear little immortals—with the venom and poison that oozes out of the festering sores of Rome? (Hear, hear.) When travellers come from the East where the plague is raging, they are placed in quarantine; they must be able to show a clean bill of health, before they mix again in society, lest they communicate the plague. And we, I say, must inspect Mr. Monkhouse's bill of health. (Hear, hear.) As to whether he adopts the views of John Calvin to their full extent, sir, I think we have no business to inquire into that, except so far as we may desire that he does not. I am no extreme Calvinist myself; neither do I think such doctrines adapted to a Sunday School. Why should we open a school at all, if such principles were true? Lost or saved for ever from their birth! Do you, sir,—to Mr. Jenkins—'Do you teach your children this doctrine?'

Mr. Jenkins: 'To be sure I do.'

Mr. Corby: 'Well, be it so: every man to his taste. You tell us often, sir, that you act

on Christian principles. You will excuse me, sir, for saying it, but I trust that your notions are somewhat of a higher tone than your principles.'

Mr. Jenkins: 'As Chairman, I appeal—'

Mr. Corby: 'Really, sir, I mean no offence whatever. If I have said anything offensive or hurtful to your feelings, I willingly tender my apology. But to proceed. You find fault, sir, with the Rev. Mr. Monkhouse's wardrobe. Now, I do not for my own part perceive that there is any unpardonable crime in wearing a clean shirt. Is there any inseparable connection between pure doctrine and dirty linen? (A laugh.) Furthermore, it seems to me to be quite unnecessary for us to inquire whether the Apostles wore Wellington-boots or Highlows—(laughter)—whether they were dressed in Oxford mixture, or Kersey drab, or double-mixed West of England broadcloth.'

Mr. Jenkins: 'I rise to order. I never said a word about Oxford mixture, or Kersey drab, or double-milled West of England broadcloth.'

Mr. Corby: 'Permit me, sir, to observe with all due deference to you as Chairman, that you are somewhat too impatient this evening. It seems to me, I repeat, that we have no business to catechise Mr. Monkhouse, how far he agrees

with John Calvin in doctrine, or why he wears a watch-guard and a clean shirt three times a week. I think, however, we have a good right to be assured whether his sentiments have or have not a Romanizing tendency; and upon this subject, in my judgment, we have a reasonable ground for questioning him. (Hear, hear.) The times are stirring, and the battle of Armageddon—'

A Voice: 'Shut up—both take the battle of Armageddon!'

Mr. Nehemiah Croasdale: 'There is no doubt much truth in what both our Chairman and Vice-Chairman have said. There is a danger lest the minds of our dear young people should be corrupted both from false doctrine and from Jesuitical vaccination. (Hear.) A great responsibility rests upon us as conductors of these schools. (Hear, hear.) I see no reason, therefore, why we should not have some assurance from Mr. Monkhouse that he is sound in doctrine and sentiment. I would not wish to act towards him at all in an ungentlemanly way; I would not unnecessarily press him, or seem to interfere with his position as a Clergyman; but we should not be justified in allowing him the use of this spacious school without knowing something about his opinions. (Hear.) We have no right, I think, to inquire into his

private circumstances; we have no right to investigate his birth, parentage, and education; his bringing-up may have been well-conducted; his mother may be a Christian woman, and his father a respectable man, able to allow him a pound a week independent of his eighty pounds a year. Neither do I think we need look too narrowly into his antecedents, or judge of him very harshly, even if he has been inside the Theatre at Oxford. Many at his age lay aside such follies of youth, and become very useful Clergymen. (Hear.) But his present sentiments are another matter; we shall have a sort of vested interest in them, if we permit him to use our commodious School-room for their exposition, and it is not usual in Yarndale to invest in the dark. (Hear, and a laugh.) How high has he ascended on the ladder of Calvinism, on the one hand, and, as to sympathies with Rome, on the other side of the question, we must know how far he advances, and where he stops. From the remarks of our worthy Chairman, he is not dressed after the fashion of a priest, from which we may infer that he will not urge auricular confession on our dear young women; but then, as our Vice-Chairman has properly remarked, it is the essence of Jesuistry to deceive; and he, for aught we know, may be wearing Romish symbols under a fashionable

dress. (Hear, hear.) A man may carry a crucifix or a hair-shirt under embroidered cambric. (Hear, hear.) However, we cannot speak confidently on this matter; and I would recommend that we should hold a conference with the Rev. Mr. Monkhouse on some material points of doctrine and duty, avoiding as much as possible any mode of proceeding which might wound his feelings or lower him in the eyes of our dear young people.' (Applause.)

Mr. Bompas (double bass): 'We're axed to give up our school for a preaching-room. Well, and who is to be the preacher? Who is to expound the gospel in our pulpit? A young Oxford chap, I hear. Well, then, once for o', I dunno loike them red-backed uns (alluding to the Oxford hood),—they're o' red-necked uns¹, or next door to 't. (A laugh.) Besides, I object to any parson coming to over-ride us in Mount Pleasant School. These Church parsons in a heap al'ays thinks as how they knows more nor other folk, and so they would hector and domineer where they could; but many other folk knows a vast deal more nor them, and are better

¹ It would be a proper question for 'Notes and Queries,' why Romanists in the North of England are called 'red-necks.' It may be from this,—there is a foolish impression among some country people in the north, that, if a Protestant is converted to Popery, he is bled profusely at the neck, to draw from it as much heretic blood as possible.

cut out for preaching, too. They look down on us God-made ministers; but, I'll answer for it, I convert more souls by myself than they o' do put together.' Here he pressed both his hands upon his breast as if he were nursing a baby, his greasy-looking fingers resembling so many sausages unwashed and uncooked. 'I met one of them fine chaps not long sin', and I told him to his face that he didn't preach the gospel, and the young jackanapes had the imperance to ask me if I could spell gospel. (A laugh.) We've gone on so far in the reet way; we've preached to the scholars a free gospel, pure and uncorrupted—not a gospel packed up into Articles like a bale of goods in a packing-case, or a pound of tea in a canister, or a ruck of pills in a pill-box—(laughter)—but one sound and unfettered—free as the air we breathe,—according to our own notion of such things. And more than o', I object to this Varsity buck; we monna ha' nowt to do wi' those chaps fro' Oxford College, for they're o' papishes, or boun' to be.' (Hear, and laughter.)

During the speech of Mr. Bompas, another manager of the school by the name of Pimpkinson joined the Committee. He was a man of mark as a merchant in Yarndale, and was in the stream of a very prosperous trade. He did not attend the school much, as his means

allowed him to live at some distance in the country. His face was not altogether displeasing, but of that iron mould which marked him as determined to pursue the way he chose, whoever thought differently. He now seemed annoyed that the business had commenced before he came; and so, when asked to deliver his sentiments, he replied rather stiffly, that he had not heard the preceding speakers, and therefore should reserve his opinions for awhile. He then pulled up his neck-collar vigorously, smoothed the ruffle in his shirt-front, and blew his nose in a determined manner.

Mr. Pimpkinson styled himself a High Churchman, and in one sense he was so. In a town like Yarndale, however, it would be difficult to explain what High-Churchmanship really means, as it is professed by some of the laity. A High Church layman in a large manufacturing town is often a nondescript: he sometimes combines a most determined political radicalism with his ultra views on ecclesiastical matters, so that his general sentiments take a deal of dovetailing to make them consistent with themselves. Mr. Pimpkinson was not altogether of this stamp, for he was a knock-down Tory. Still, there might probably be some troublesome crotchets, some prickly thorns, about the High-Churchmanship of Mr. Pimpkinson.

Mr. Frederick Shorland (somewhat flushed): 'Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I cannot express in terms sufficiently strong my disappointment at the tone adopted by the previous speakers; indeed, if I had heard from others that such sentiments had been uttered, I could scarcely have believed it. (Oh!) I came here to make arrangements for an Evening Service in Mount Pleasant Sunday School, thinking it would be regarded as a boon, and I find that the project is looked upon with suspicion and disfavour. (No.) I came also to offer my services in the working of the School, out of a sincere and simple desire to benefit a neighbourhood which I fear has been too long neglected; but I find that any co-operation on my part must be quite ineffectual for good, so long as the present system of management is continued. (Murmurs.) I could have had no conception and I speak it without any reserve—I could have had no conception till I came here of the kind of management adopted in a Sunday School like this, and of the unreasonable expectations entertained by the managers. (Murmurs.) First, as to the right of appointing the Clergyman,—why, Mr. Monkhouse has been instituted as the Minister, not of this School only, but of Mudlington generally, where no doubt a Church and Schools will in due time be

built. What possible business, then, have you, gentlemen, to expect that you should nominate the Clergyman of the district? Then, you speak of catechising Mr. Monkhouse on his doctrines and mode of life, as you would question a young man who was applying to you for a place of fifty pounds a year,—to which kind of situation, indeed, the Chairman has likened that of a Curate, only exalting the Clerk in a Workshop over the Clerk in the Pulpit. (A laugh.) Now, I warn you not to try on your catechetical plan. (Oh!) I feel quite assured that, as a Christian gentleman, Mr. Monkhouse will meet your dictatorial tone as it deserves. (Oh! oh!) Mr. Jenkins has charged Mr. Monkhouse with having recited an Essay in the Oxford Theatre. If it were worth while to explain, I might state that the Theatre at Oxford is not an ordinary building for the acting of plays, but the Hall where the public meetings of the University are held, and where the Prize Essays and Poems are recited. (Hear.) Mr. Jenkins wishes to know whether Mr. Monkhouse agrees in doctrine with John Calvin. I say without hesitation that Mr. Monkhouse does not entertain any such extreme sentiments. (Hear.) His opinions are moderate and befitting a Clergyman. Indeed, is it not a contradiction for a person holding such high Calvinistic opinions to join in Sunday

School teaching at all? Why, with such views, inculcate religious duty either on old or young? Mr. Jenkins says that he teaches his family such doctrines, and he exults in doing so. But is it not a scandalous thing for a man to be a father of a family at all, when he believes that a considerable part of them are condemned before birth to eternal perdition? Why should Mr. Jenkins and his party, who are themselves saved, no doubt, thus sport with the souls of others? If I had my way, I would deal roundly with men holding such sentiments—(oh!)—I would lay an interdict on their marriage altogether!’ (Loud cries of “Oh! oh!”)

Mr. Jacob Shorland. ‘Be moderate, brother. What saith the Scripture? “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.”’

Mr. Frederick Shorland. ‘Yes, let those replenish the earth who believe that they are parents of responsible beings, but not those who say that their children are lost or saved before they are born. (Hear.) Once for all,—if Mr. Monkhouse enters Mount Pleasant School either as a Manager or an Officiating Minister, he shall do so as a Clergyman and a gentleman, not as the slave of one man or another. And I will say further, before I sit down, that from what I have heard this evening, it is high time the affairs of this School should be investigated

more than they seem to have been. I am informed that forty years ago the building was erected as a Church School in the main, by Churchmen's money, and that it has, from the not appointing Trustees as the old ones died off, fallen into such a condition as to be under no law. (Sensation.) My only and anxious desire is for the good of the people in the district; and as I am determined to work for that object, I will make the School on Mount Pleasant a subject of consideration, so as to endeavour to place it on a more efficient footing, whether its present managers agree with me or not.' (Hear, and murmurs.)

Member (with ordinary common sense): 'I quite agree in what Mr. Frederick Shorland has said. I have attended the School very regularly for some time, and I have lately been thinking of withdrawing from the work altogether, simply because I have seen that we are talking a vast deal about everything, and doing no manner of good from our present system of management. (Expressions of dissent). There is very little instruction going on in the School between teacher and scholar; there is a mighty amount of preaching from the desk of every possible kind of doctrine from Calvinism to Socinianism; the scholars are taken to every conceivable place

of worship according to a manager's caprice; there is no unity of action or sentiment; every one, as Mr. Bompas says, preaches a free gospel—that is, the gospel of his fancy; and consequently there is no discipline enforced or instruction conveyed in our Schools. (Murmurs.) I am compelled to express my belief, also, that there is too much self-seeking among ourselves, and too little of that single eye for the good of others. (Oh! oh!) These have been my thoughts for some time; and if Mr. Monkhouse be a man of moderation and good sense, I will vote that he not only may have the School for an Evening Service, but that he be requested to take the management of it in the morning and afternoon.' (Hear, and expressions of dissent.)

Mr. Graham: 'I can confirm what the previous speaker has stated. I have visited the School for a few Sundays back, and I have found there a general disorder and disorganisation. (No, no.) I say, yes, yes. The attendance is extremely irregular, and the teaching very defective.'

Mr. Bompas: 'Could yo' mend it?'

Mr. Graham: 'I think that quite possible; at any rate, I could not well make it worse. Nobody knows whether it is a Church or a

Dissenting School, or to what denomination of religion at all it belongs. It is evidently doing little good, if any, as it is at present conducted; and whether it be placed under the management of Mr. Monkhouse or a Committee, it is most certainly time that some fresh arrangements should be made to ensure unity of purpose, sentiment, and action.' (Oh! oh!)

Mr. Pimpkinson: 'Not having heard the several speeches at the commencement of your deliberations, I am unable to say whether I agree with them or not. From what has been stated, however, since I came into the room, I fancy that much has been said that does not bear strictly upon the subject in question. (No, Yes.) Is the School to be opened for an Evening Service? And if so, how far is the strong doctrine of Calvinism to be encouraged? These seem to have been the points of discussion. Now, I think that such an extreme doctrine ought to be rigidly excluded from a Sunday School: indeed, to allow it there would seem to me to be contrary to common sense and plain reason, if not an evident self-contradiction. Nor do I go with Mr. Bompas in praise of what he calls his free gospel. We are Churchmen, or ought to be. (Hear.)

At the same time, I do not agree with the speakers who would persuade us that no good is being done in Mount Pleasant School. (Hear.) It is true, I do not attend there much myself, but our annual reports show that the schools are very efficient in their working. (Hear, hear.) For my own part I cannot see at present any objection to the Building being used on a Sunday evening for Divine Service according to the rites and ceremonies of the Established Church. (Hear, hear.)

Hereupon a promiscuous discussion ensued. Mr. Jenkins poured out a large measure of virtuous wrath and mildly diluted indignation, on Christian principles; Mr. Corby mixed up with these ingredients an infusion of his acids; Mr. Croasdale added a small portion of his half-an-half diluted; Jacob Shorland quoted a few texts of Scripture away from the purpose; Mr. Bompas defended his free gospel in the vulgar tongue; and Mr. Pimpkinson maintained a sort of armed neutrality. But the rest of the meeting stood their ground firmly; Frederick Shorland was resolute in his purpose, and threatened most determinedly, somewhat to the dismay of his opponents, to investigate their legal title to the possession of the School-building. At length, after the

witches' caldron had cooled a little, it was decided and formally entered on the books, that the Rev. Mr. Monkhouse might use the School-room for an Evening Service, his connection with the management of the classes having been left an open question.

CHAPTER XXII.

'A WORM I' THE BUD.'

'WHAT ails ye, Maggie?' inquired Mrs. Maxwell of her daughter; 'you have quite lost your appetite; you have never much, but now it has quite gone; you can fancy nothing in the way of eating; besides, you are getting as thin as a lath, and your colour which was so fresh and bonny is leaving you by degrees. What ails you, my girl? Something, I'm sure, is the matter; and it's just like you to be keeping it to yourself. Why won't you speak out, if there be anything a-worrying you? Better tell us plainly than break your heart in silence; and I'm sure as of my life that if the truth be known, neither man nor woman can say¹ "black is your nail," my bonny brid (bird).'²

¹ This saying, common among the lower orders, has a parallel in many languages.

Dente si nigro fieres, vel uno
Turpior ungui,
Crederem.—*Horace L. ii. Ode 8.*

It is intended to express the absence of the least blemish. The phrase is similar—*ad unguem factus homo.* *Hor. Serm. i. 5.*

² This phrase of Chaucer still lingers in South Lancashire.

The family of the Maxwells was one of the most respectable among the population of Mudlington. The old campaigner had his pension for long and arduous devotion to the service of his country; his son, the master of the house, was a mechanic of a superior order, and earned his three pounds a week; Margaret, who was his only living child, was the mistress of one of the neighbouring schools, and in receipt probably of seventy pounds a year. The several members of the family were frugal in their habits; Mrs. Maxwell was a managing woman in household matters; the cottage was a picture of tidiness and order: so that they were able to live comfortably and well, a pattern to their neighbours and respected by them; while they laid up from month to month a round sum in good and trustworthy investments, as a safeguard against any emergency that might arise.

Margaret Maxwell, in mental acquirements and in the mere exterior of manner, was much above the neighbourhood where she resided. She had early shown an aptitude for learning, and she had combined with it that natural gracefulness of behaviour which art may emulate but can never in itself attain, inas-

much as it is mainly dependent on intuitive sensibility. Her parents had encouraged her inherent bent of disposition; they had given her a good education, apprenticed her as a pupil teacher, and in course of time sent her for the ordinary period to a Training Institution in London. She was now a Certificated Teacher, and, as the mistress of a large school, most successful in at once conciliating the affections of her pupils and in training their minds and dispositions. Her position was not perhaps what she would herself have chosen; for while her own sympathies were entirely with the Established Church, her school was one of that mixed class which was under the management of ladies and gentlemen who belong to different religious denominations. She, however, made no complaint; and if any little unpleasantnesses arose on account of this incongruous management, they were not sufficient to ruffle her temper, or at any rate to cause any disturbance to appear on the surface. The Brierlys were among the Committee, and took a leading part in the direction of the school.

It was now Saturday afternoon; the family of the Maxwells had just finished their dinner, and the matron was "siding up"

the house for the day. The members of the household were preparing for their several species of recreation; for Saturday afternoon in Yarndale is set apart for general relaxation. In very truth, it is a pleasant thought, that a mighty workshop like Yarndale should be closed one afternoon in the week, and the operatives turned out to play.

The human mind and body were never moulded to be on a continual strain; human life was never intended by a good Providence to be one unceasing course of toil; the original sentence was not designed to be one of unintermittent labour. Without an active employment of our natural powers, it is true, there can be no real enjoyment in life; the curse both upon the ground and upon men is tempered by a blessing, for mental and bodily occupation is the salt and seasoning of existence. But when the burden becomes too heavy, the human machine must soon come to a stand.

'I am very well, mother,' replied Margaret; 'only, you know, one cannot always be in good spirits. I have a large school under me, which brings with it many anxieties and cares, and sometimes perhaps I get a little low-spirited against my will, that's all.'

‘Miss Maxwell,’ said a pupil teacher from the school, who happened to be present, ‘is not happy about something, we are all sure; for we often see the tears coming into her eyes when she is engaged at her work, and when there is nothing to account for it. We do not like to ask her the cause; but we do everything we can, to make the School duties comfortable and easy for her.’

‘What a foolish girl you are, Jane, to talk in such a way!’ Margaret replied. ‘Do you not fancy that every one has some trifling anxiety or other which it is not necessary to make known—which, indeed, it is not worth the while to make known? Young as you are, you can understand that very well.’

Margaret replied lightly; but she felt that the observation of her pupil teacher, as well as that of her own family, had detected the mental uneasiness which she was so wishful to conceal.

‘Maggie’s so nesh,’¹ said the old grandmother, rousing herself up as she just caught the purport of the conversation,—‘she’s so easily put out. Young girls now-a-days begin to whimper if they prick their finger, and they faint away if they see a drop of blood. It was na so once.’

¹ ‘Nesh’—a term used by our old English writers.

'Ye'd do but badly without Maggie, at any rate, dame,' said the old man. 'Who would tidy you up, and make you look smart and fresh as paint, if you hadn't Maggie to do for you? Who would "fettle"¹ your cup of ale for you before you went to bed? Who would read for you your Chapter, and explain it like a Minister? You mustn't find fault with Maggie for being soft-hearted. It is not every woman that can go through what you have borne, maybe; but it wouldn't be according to the rule of a wise Providence, if we were all alike in our tempers and dispositions'

'Well, ye need na preach your homily,' replied the old lady; 'I've nothing to say agen Maggie; she's been a good child to me, sin' I nursed her the day through on my knee, and crooned to her some of those auld sangs o' Scotland which made ane's young bluid run warm through ane's veins.'

¹ Ale is said to be 'fettled' when it is warmed and made tasty with sugar and spices. The term 'fettle' is of wide application in Lancashire. He is in good 'fettle,' or condition. It is used also as a verb, 'I'll fettle it,' or repair it, set it right. In one department of the worsted manufactures, there is a class of workmen known by the name of 'fettlers.' Sometimes it is used in the sense of deranging. 'Fettle his meawth wi' a brick,' is said to be an occasional exhortation at Oldham, where the practice of up-and-down fighting still lingers. The derivation of the term is yet a matter of dispute.

‘Why, mother,’ said Mrs. Maxwell, laughing, ‘you begin, every now and then, to talk your Scotch again.’

‘And why should I no? It comes back on me sometimes as from a far-away country and time, somehow like a low moaning wind in a distant valley. But I must never see bonny Scotland more. And Maggie, when I sang to her, used to laugh as if she understood me. She was but a weakly child, and she was “put out” with a little then. She would cry for a word, and she would throw her arms round my neck when she was frightened, and she would kiss me when I was a bit cross. She did na then give promise that she would be able to rough the world when she grew up.’

‘Why, granny,’ said Margaret, going up to the old woman and taking her hand; ‘what’s amiss? You are all talking as if something terrible had happened or was likely to happen to me; when I am in pretty good health, and intend to continue the same Maggie to you as ever, grandmother.’

‘That’s as it should be,’ said the old woman; ‘but your mother says you are na comfortable about something. Is it love, my lass?’

‘Did you ever know anything about love, granny?’ inquired Margaret, laughing.

'Did I not?' said the octogenarian, sharply. 'How else, think you, did your grandfather get me, when I was young and bonny as yourself, darling? Only I was more wilful and headstrong than you are, my lass; and may-be I made greater sacrifices for the sake of love than you will ever have to do. But what's the use of talking? It's over and done; and nobody has heard complaint from me—that's one thing,—and nobody shall—that's another. But tell me, child, are you pining in love?'

'I have nothing to complain of, so far as that goes,' replied Margaret.

'Then is any one dealing with you harshly or unfairly?' inquired the old lady. 'If it should be so,' she continued, striking her withered hand against the arm of her chair, 'only tell me, and be it who it may, depend on't, I'll let the loon know what an old body, who was once a gentlewoman, can do.' So saying she relapsed into her normal condition of silent musing.

Mrs. Maxwell did not pursue the conversation further; but she was more than ever assured that there were some unpleasant reflections preying upon her daughter's mind.

'Will you want me this afternoon, mother?' inquired Margaret.

‘No, child. What are you thinking of doing?’

‘Only Henry Graham said last Sunday that he would call, and ask you if we might take a short walk together into the country this afternoon.’

Mrs. Maxwell had entertained occasional misgivings lest something on the part of Graham was the cause of Margaret’s uneasiness. ‘Henry,’ she reasoned with herself, ‘is now a rising young man; he is well educated, and has got a connection with a rich manufacturing Firm; if he be lucky, he is on the road to make his fortune. Has he begun to hold up his head, I wonder, and to make Margaret feel that he fancies himself a great man? He may do so, without knowing it almost; for she, I’m sure, would fret at anything that seemed like a slight. And yet I’ve never seen that in Henry. He is the same young person, to my mind, he ever was; and his only thought seems to be, how he may do his duty to the Shorlands and to the work-people under him. I will not believe that he can think less of his engagements to Margaret.’ Some such reflections as these had passed through Mrs. Maxwell’s mind before; but she had not thought it well to express them to her daughter. And now, by suggesting a

suspicion of this nature, she was afraid lest she might only increase Margaret's anxiety. So she assented at once to the proposal, and hoped the walk would be of service to the pair after their week's employment.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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